

FOR LAND AND LIBERTY:
BLACK TERRITORIAL SEPARATISM IN THE SOUTH, 1776-1904

By

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This dissertation is dedicated to my best friend and family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American Colonization Society
ACVA	Atlantic Canadian Virtual Archives
BLD	Black Loyalist Database
CPR	Commissioner of Public Records
KSHS	Kansas State Historical Society
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NSARM	Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management
NSM	Nova Scotia Museum
PANB	Public Archives of New Brunswick

INTRODUCTION

Popular culture has acknowledged Black Nationalism in the twentieth century through such movies as *Malcolm X* directed by Spike Lee and *Panther* directed by Mario Van Peebles, however far less media attention has been given to the nationalistic movements of blacks in the nineteenth century. Outside of academia these movements were virtually all but forgotten, or so I thought. I first became interested in Black Nationalism as an undergraduate and while quite interesting to me, I was resigned to the idea that the subject would be confined to the outer realms of contemporary culture. Settled in this belief, I was quite surprised when my professor recommended I rent the 1972 film *Buck and the Preacher* as it pertained to my area of interest. Produced by Columbia pictures, Sidney Portier directs and stars in the movie alongside Harry Belafonte and Ruby Dee. Portier plays a guide who helps former slaves avoid cheap labor agents and become western settlers after the Civil War. Not only was the film thoroughly entertaining, but I was also just as interested in seeing the story of territorial separatism and black southerners leaving the South in search for a better life portrayed in a major motion picture.

I personally came across the subject of separatism, while researching blacks in Georgia for a seminar. While several works referenced the prerequisites and growth of Black Nationalism in the antebellum North, I was surprised to find similar circumstances occurring in 18th century Georgia. By the late 1700s indicators of Black Nationalist development such as the formation of independent religious organizations, collective acts of rebellion and the adoption of a shared racial identity were taking place in the Georgia lowcountry far from the literate, educated, and upper class black elite of the North.

I was intrigued by this question regarding the South's contribution to Black Nationalism and sought to clarify its role. Historian Claude Clegg argues that Black Nationalism "is a general template of ideologies, programs, and political visions geared toward encouraging racial pride, collective action, and group autonomy among people of African descent."¹ This dissertation uses territorial separatism as a means of measuring the amount of and support for Black Nationalism in the South. Territorial separatism is one component of Black Nationalism whereby blacks seek to relocate to a distinct area free from the immediate vicinity and control of whites. Black separatism ideally includes the formation of a separate nation for blacks however, it is not inherently nationalistic. Some separatists may advocate for only an all black state or town, a condition which presumably would allow them to remain subject to a white government without being directly involved in white society.² Southern black separatists largely adhered to this form of semi separatist philosophy.

I chose territorial separatism to address the question of the South's role in the development of Black Nationalism, because of its measurability and its acceptance by scholars as a prototype of the Black Nationalist ideology.³ The participants, who emigrated, desired to emigrate or even considered emigration as a pragmatic means to improve their condition attest to the amount of separatist support in the region. Although black southerners may not have always been able to own newspapers or have the use of public media, their advocacy of separatism can be judged by other means, namely, their actions. The numbers of black southerners leaving the South are readily documentable. The few writings that they did leave, though usually not

¹ Claude Andrew Clegg, "Africa and the African American imagination," (Ann Arbor, Michigan: ProQuest Information and Learning, 2006): 24.

² Raymond Hall, *Black Separatism in the United States* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1974), 3.

³ Moses Jeremiah Wilson, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1978), 19; Clegg, "Africa and the African American imagination," 24; Hall, *Black Separatism in the United States*, 1.

published in a public forum, reveal their unique interpretation of Black Nationalism. Scholars such as Paul Gilroy study Black Nationalism largely as an intellectual movement involving a public discourse between learned individuals and the publication of philosophical doctrine.⁴ However, if one can understand the role of black southerners in territorial separatism, a quintessential ideology of Black Nationalism, then one can infer this subaltern population's support for and contribution to the movement.

Black southerners who advocated separatism did so because of their desire for land and liberty. During the 18th century agricultural production was the foundation of the southern economy and one of the most notable means of acquiring economic success. Like many other black freedmen throughout the Atlantic World, this desire for land ownership was incessant among black southerners and remained present from the founding of the United States until the early twentieth century.⁵ It is indicative of the value of entrepreneurial success held by many black southerners. The meaning of liberty evolved as the status of blacks changed in the United States. Prior to emancipation liberty for southern blacks most commonly meant manumission, while afterwards it was used in reference to political autonomy and enfranchisement. For slaves, former slaves, and poor free blacks who comprised the black lower class in the South neither goal was negotiable as one could not be achieved without the other. These goals implied degrees of economic and political self-determination, which reflected the priorities of lower class black southerners.

⁴ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* Paul Gilroy. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

⁵ Rawle Farley cites the desire for land and liberty as being the "most decisive and continuous" objectives held by slaves in Jamaica that helped instigate the end of slavery and the free village settlements; Rawle Farley, "The Rise of Village Settlements in British Guiana," in *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* (Mona, Jamaica: Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies, University of the West Indies, 1970), 59; The freedmen in Jamaica also sought economic and political independence after emancipation; Thomas Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 149; Mike Meacham, "The Exoduster Movement," *Western Journal of Black Studies* vol. 27 no. 2 (Summer 2003): 6.

In this study class is determined by one's legal status and occupation. Slaves regardless of occupation form part of the lower class in black society. Free black tradesman and servants along with unskilled laborers make up the rest of this cohort. Their status is best understood as proto-peasantry class because of their relative self-sufficiency and rural environment. This group of blacks can be classified largely as a reconstituted peasantry or one which is formed through resistance movements.⁶ Most southern blacks before and after the Civil War were employed in agricultural work and lived a largely subsistence based existence. Their desire to become independent land owners and resist subjugation was in part influenced by this background.

Unlike other slave or former slave societies in the Atlantic World, whites in the American South overwhelmingly denied blacks access to land and liberty.⁷ Before the Civil War the lack of political opportunities necessitated black participation in white sponsored social movements in order to achieve these goals. The zenith of black territorial separatism in the South occurred after the War when southern blacks were free to publicly assemble, articulate, and collectively act on their Black Nationalist ideologies. Patterns in the structure and emergence of black separatist movements originally began to form in the late 18th century and were able to come to fruition after emancipation.

The southern context largely determined the trajectory that Black Nationalism would take among the black lower classes. While abolition began to increase more rapidly in the North after

⁶ Reconstituted peasants became peasants not by birth but by seeking land ownership through their resistance of slavery or exploitation. Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 132-133.

⁷ The problem of land acquisition for ex-slaves was solved to some degree in British Guiana where land was made available for purchase. Raymond T. Smith, "Land Tenure in Three Negro Villages in British Guiana." 243 -266, in *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean: An Anthropological Reader*, edited by Michael M. Horowitz, (Garden City, NY: The Natural History Press, 1971), 244-245; In Cuba ex-slaves were allowed by authorities to squat upon unsettled land and form small holdings during the absence of the legitimate proprietor. Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom Louisiana and Cuba after Slavery* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 118.

the American Revolution, avenues to freedom in the South decreased. The more south one traveled the more draconian the laws regarding slavery became.⁸ The southern environment lacked moderate alternatives for blacks to achieve land or liberty. This circumstance, rather than nullifying the development of Black Nationalism, influenced the decision of blacks in the region to support more radical agendas such as territorial separatism.

Scholars Patrick Rael and Moses Jeremiah Wilson have placed the apex of nineteenth century black radical thought in the North, the work of a literate urban black upper class in the antebellum period.⁹ Rael contends that in order for Black Nationalism to develop “the concept of nationhood must be widely available and articulated,” and that its constructed nature “helps locate its origins among a black intelligentsia in the antebellum urban North.”¹⁰ Studies that emphasize American nationalistic influences on black thought generally look to the strategies employed by upper class blacks in the North, relying on the sentiments of movement leaders, editors, ministers, and other professionals. This type of analysis often concludes that black sentiments regarding emigration are ideologically contradictory, as blacks who advocated emigration at times practiced social and cultural elitism by criticizing aspects of African or lower class black American culture, privileging Western or upper class cultural practices and achievement, and yet maintaining a rigidly distinct American identity throughout their calls for black unity and nationhood.¹¹

Although this elite segment of the black population was the most articulate publicly, their philosophies are not representative of all blacks in the United States. By focusing on this small

⁸ Douglas R. Egerton, *Death or Liberty: African Americans and Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 150, 35.

⁹ Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 211; Wilson, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism*, 6.

¹⁰ Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North*, 212-213.

¹¹ Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Alexander Crummell: A Study of Civilization and Discontent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 7-8; Tunde Adeleke, *Unafrikan Americans: Nineteenth Century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1998), 9.

Northern population and research period the experiences of the black lower class majority and their encounters with Black Nationalism have been neglected. Although black southerners were interested in separatism, black northern leadership was generally opposed to such movements. Separatism and/or cooperation with white colonization organizations such as the American Colonization Society was generally abhorred by northern black leaders such as Frederick Douglass, however such strategies remained plausible options for many black southerners.¹² The opinions of blacks expressed in Northern newspapers did not necessarily reflect the views of lower class blacks, especially those of black southerners, who generally did not have access to such media outlets.

In the North elite black supporters of Black Nationalism most readily championed racial uplift and the civilizing mission, two major tenants of 19th century Black Nationalism. These values reflected northern culture and not the southern lower class roots held by the majority of separatist supporters.¹³ Racial uplift implied a deviancy among black people and culture, while civilizing missions most commonly referred to African evangelism and/or modernization. Although such issues may have been viewed with urgency among the black Northern intelligentsia, they were not major concerns of slaves or freedmen in the South. Their motivations for participating in separatist movements were far more practical.

Historian Adeleke Tunde asserts that Black Nationalism in the United States originates from the reaction of blacks to the institution of slavery.¹⁴ Following this logic the origins of territorial separatism also originate from the slave experience. Separatism was most popular

¹² Meacham, "The Exoduster Movement," 7; Kwando Kinshasa, *Emigration vs. Assimilation: The Debate in the African American Press, 1827-1861* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., 1988), 121-122; James L. Horton and Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community, and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 187-188.

¹³ Rael, 5; Wilson, *Golden Age of Black Nationalism*, 23.

¹⁴ Tunde, *Unafrikan Americans*, 3-4.

among blacks in the South where the institution of slavery was most ingrained. During the Revolutionary, antebellum, and post Civil War periods black southerners devised ways by which to obtain land and liberty by forming stable communities apart from whites.

Tunde and other scholars who have placed the foundations of black thought within the slave South have overemphasized the role of Africa and slave culture.¹⁵ Before the Civil War black resistance traditions were profoundly influenced by the activities of the slave communities in the South. Slaves showed group solidarity and resistance to white authority by collectively initiating violent uprisings, running away, autonomic religious interpretations, and attempts at sabotage. African cultural traditions also allowed them to resist aspects of white American culture and increase racial solidarity. African culture and identity, however, were not the driving force behind southern black separatism. Although persuasive culturally, such studies of Black Nationalism neglect the importance of political and social developments among lower class southern blacks of the nineteenth century. By the late 18th century blacks were acculturated with American values.¹⁶ The southern black interpretation of Black Nationalism reflected liberation philosophies from the Revolutionary Era and a Southern agriculturalist outlook toward success.

When it came to choosing a settlement location black southerners were flexible. They were not resolute in regards to emigration only to Africa, but considered settling in numerous and diverse locales. The decision by black southerners about where to emigrate varied by timing, organizational outlook, and availability. This phenomenon illustrates that African cultural affinity and common identity, though vital to ethnic unification in the U.S., were not the impetus for black emigrants. Instead, lower class black southerners rationalized destinations by

¹⁵ Tunde, 5; Sterling Stuckley, *Ideological Origins of Black Nationalism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972,) 5; Sterling Stuckley, *Slave Culture in America: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987,) 3-97; Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts and the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1979), xviii-xix, 52, 82.

¹⁶ Tunde, 5 Meacham, 4.

considering principally the geo-economic and political practicalities of a region and not the common heritage between themselves and its indigenous inhabitants. Southern blacks supported territorial separatism primarily for material reasons, therefore location choices varied depending on the perceived benefits that a given area could offer and not on a commitment to an ideology of global racial improvement.

My study of separatism uses social theory and historical analysis to investigate how lower class black southerners by their participation in white movements and black emigration organizations influenced a Black Nationalist philosophy distinct from its Northern counterpart. Black southerners navigated political opportunities and attempted to gain land and liberty through separatism by allying themselves with the British government and evacuating during the Revolutionary War Era, participating in white colonization movements during the antebellum period, and forming emigration movements after the Civil War.

Territorial separatism and its development in the South can be better understood by using social movement theory. Political process and resource mobilization theories guide this dissertation's analysis of separatist movement structures after the Civil War and black participation in white sponsored movements prior to emancipation.¹⁷ Southern black separatism is shaped by both these paradigms emphasizing participant agency, social context, and exchange. It began to develop during the earliest days of the American Republic when blacks seized the favorable conditions brought by wartime chaos to escape slavery and become free settlers. In the antebellum era black separatist participation also remained hinged to the graces of whites. After

¹⁷ Political process theory maintains that social movements occur only after a long period of time, and in response to broad, economic, social, and political changes, which affect insurgency and the structural potential of collective action; Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 36-37; Resource mobilization theory emphasizes the resources of social movement participants and holds that social movements must have a core group of elite members who possess valuable resources such as political connections, economic capital, or informational knowledge. Joseph Craig Jenkins and Charles Perrow, "Insurgency of the Powerless: Farm Worker Movements (1946-1972)," *American Sociological Review* 42 no. 2 (1977): 251.

the Civil War black collective action was far less abated by white society and black separatists, building upon these previous experiences, were able to initiate independent movements.

Grievance and spatial process theories are used to analyze the emergence of independent separatist movements after the Civil War.¹⁸ They account for the timing and pattern of location in these movements. An adverse environment in the South did not effectively nullify black socio-political protest before the Civil War. Such conditions were neither strong enough before nor after the Civil War to extinguish black protest. Rather prior to the War black separatists participated in white colonization and resettlement efforts in order to achieve structural gains in the form of land and liberty, but this early black participation depended overwhelmingly on white participation. Only after emancipation when white southerners had less control over blacks could separatists act upon their grievances and organize emigration movements at their discretion when attempting to realize their goals; and they did so. In their quest for political and economic self determination, black separatists after the Civil War organized independent emigration movements when spurred by extenuating circumstance. They still worked with whites, but possessed far greater agency than before regarding when and where to relocate.

Chapter one looks at early black separatism in the South during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, when some southern blacks allied themselves with the British and relocated to all black communities in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and in some cases Sierra Leone. Black southerners participated in evacuations when land and liberty were offered as incentives by the

¹⁸ Grievance theory poses that a strain must exist as felt by participants before a social movement can occur; Edward Walsh, "Resource Mobilization and Citizen Protest in Communities around Three Mile Island," *Social Problems* 29 no. 2 (October 1981): 1; Spatial processes scholars theorize that proximity is significant in social movement emergence and growth; David A. Snow, Louis A. Zurcher Jr, and Sheldon Ekland-Olson, "Social Networks and Social Movements: A Microstructural Approach to Differential Recruitment," *American Sociological Review* 45 no. 5 (October 1980): 797-798.

British. This chapter examines the structure of this participation by analyzing recruitment networks, strategies, leadership, ideology, and identity.

In addition to these characteristics chapter two also investigates the diffusion of information among southern black separatists advocating colonization during the antebellum era. Numerous blacks in the South were interested in territorial separatism, however their inability to collectively organize coerced participation in white sponsored movements for black colonization which did not necessarily express the ideals of the black masses. Their participation with the American Colonization Society and settlement in Liberia was largely initiated during times of shared urgency or opportunity with white separatist supporters.

Only during Reconstruction were southern blacks able to publicly assemble, articulate, and collectively act on their Black Nationalist ideologies. Chapter three examines the emergence of Post Civil War emigration movements. It uses county level data to cite geographic trends regarding where grassroots black separatist movements occurred and the significant economic, political, and social disruptions inciting them. Chapter four investigates the structure of the numerous emigration movements taking place after the War. In addition to previous areas of analysis framing or the ways in which participants portrayed their ideology to others is also examined. During this era black southerners who chose to emigrate to Kansas or Liberia in order to achieve land and liberty are examined.

Near the end of the nineteenth century scandals and fiscal instability hastened the decline of separatist movements in the South.¹⁹ Southern black protest permeated politically into third party movements and found avenues to economic success through migration to the North. In the years prior to the ACS sending its last emigrant to Liberia in 1904, it had only been sending one

¹⁹ Michelle Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 47.

or two emigrants, if any, for over a decade. Although relatively few blacks were able to emigrate, the levels of interest expressed by southern blacks in this option is proof of the movement's large following in the region. When considering these insights, one is able to see a continuous, though not always easily documented, separatist tradition among lower class blacks in the South as well as uncover contribution of non-elite groups to Black Nationalism.

CHAPTER I

THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA

In January of 1819 Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum were desperately trying to provide for themselves and/or their families during the arduous winter season in New Brunswick. While Borum was single and relatively young at thirty years of age, Johnson was fifty three years old and was undoubtedly more stressed from being unable to adequately provide for his wife and two children. Both men had emigrated to the province from the United States nearly four years earlier after the withdrawal of British forces during the War of 1812. Born in Virginia, a state that had an extensive agricultural economy, they would have been familiar with farming and it is not surprising that both sought to continue this livelihood once settled in their new home. Together as black refugees from the war, they petitioned the Lieutenant Governor Harris Hailes for three hundred and two hundred acre grants, respectively, in the town of Springfield in Kings County, as neither had been granted any plots of land since their arrival.¹ The emphasis on self-sufficiency by black refugees such as Johnson and Borum are indicative of the concerns of black emigrants from the South. Their desires to leave the U.S. in order to acquire land and achieve liberty are the foundations of Southern black separatism, which began its development during this early revolutionary period.

¹ The Memorial of Benjamin Jonson and Henry Borum, 29 January 1819, King's County, "Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783-1854," Atlantic Canadian Virtual Archives, diplomatic rendition, document no. Johnson_Benjamin_1819_01. RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783-1918, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Fredricton, New Brunswick; Petition of Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum, 24 July 1819, Kingston, New Brunswick. "Black Loyalist in New Brunswick, 1783-1854," ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Johnson_Benjamin_1819_03. RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB; As black refugees from the United States from the War of 1812 the two would have been eligible to receive land grants from the British government. Although owning no land, the two owned livestock and "supported themselves comfortably." The duo was able to jointly clear thirty acres of land for a proprietor during a four year period before petitioning for land grants.

The southern context was critical to this early phase of black territorial separatism encompassing both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. During both periods large numbers of the lower class blacks including runaway slaves as well as skilled and unskilled free black laborers worked with the British for the purposes of acquiring rights and land. Initially settling in Nova Scotia and later New Brunswick, many continued their journey across the Atlantic to Sierra Leone in order to achieve these goals. These basic objectives would become the ideological basis for all of black southern separatism during the long nineteenth century.² In this aspect southern separatism differed significantly from its northern counterpart. The years 1776 to 1820 are extremely important to the early development of separatism in the South. Patterns in movement emergence, leadership, participation, ideology and strategy that initially emerged during the late 18th century during British wartime evacuations foreshadowed the more developed characteristics of later southern black separatist movements.

Research studies on Black Nationalism that focus too narrowly on the importance of the North mistakenly underestimate the importance of the South in its development. Paul Cuffee is considered by many to be the father of black separatism, because of his expeditions to Africa in the early nineteenth century, which focused on evangelism, commercialism, and humanitarianism. Representative separatist leaders such as Henry McNeal Turner and Marcus Garvey would later continue to emphasize these goals.³ These goals were of secondary importance, however, to most southern black separatists. Land ownership and various forms of civil rights are the motivating factors that account for southern black support of the British.

² The long nineteenth century describes the period from 1789-1915 and was first studied by Eric Hobsbawm in his works *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848*, (New York: New American Library, 1962), Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), and Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1915* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, c1987); New Brunswick became a separate colony after 1784 largely because of the numerous influx of black and white loyalists after the Revolutionary War.

³ Clegg, "Africa and the African American imagination," 4-5, 8-10.

Although only a tiny minority of the black population in the United States actually emigrated to all black settlements during the revolutionary period, the number of supporters for and potential participants in separatist movements was much higher. Fear, the loss of familial ties, or an optimistic outlook toward the U.S. are cited by historians as factors deterring emigration.⁴ However the impact of these factors on lower class blacks in the South is exaggerated. Black southern separatists traveled in family or small groups and therefore may not have had to sever as many immediate kinship relationships as presumed.⁵ And although the journey to any foreign country could be perilous during this period, the lives of many slaves in the South were just as uncertain. Masters could make slaves suffer various forms of psychological or physical abuse such as being sold, selling loved ones, mutilation, overwork, and degradation. As to conditions in the South after the Revolution, immediate hope for progress in the equitable treatment of blacks was quickly fading.

Slavery had become well established in the South by 1776 and the coming revolution only entrenched the institution further. Although initially after the Revolutionary War a liberal manumission policy was adopted by some southern states, by 1810 most had enacted stiff laws against manumissions. In many cases if a slave owner wished to manumit a slave, judicial and even congressional approval would be needed. By 1820 the South was home to more than 1.4 million slaves and while escape to the North was for some a possibility, in many ways the North was not an adequate refuge for blacks during the period. Most Northern states and some in the

⁴ James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700 - 1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 186.

⁵ David George, *An Account of the Life of Mr. David George, from Sierra Leone in Africa; Given by Himself in a Conversation with Brother Rippon of London, and Brother Pearce of Birmingham, (1793)*, in Joanna Brooks and John Saillant editors, *'Facing Zion, Facing Forward': First Writers of the Black Atlantic, 1785-1798*, Pgs: 177-190, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 182; Harvey Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: the Black Refugees in British North America, 1815 - 1860* (Burlington, Vermont: University of Vermont Press, 2006), 37.

Midwest had laws criminalizing or restricting black immigration.⁶ For most blacks living in slavery, this form of escape was not a likely option. However, during periods of war many southern blacks were able to escape in large numbers. For them American wars were not times to rebel against or fight foreign enemies, but instead opportunities to rebel against and fight slavery.

The majority of black loyalists during the Revolutionary War and black refugees during the War of 1812 were from the Southern states of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.⁷ Some historians estimate that during the American Revolution anywhere from eighty to one hundred thousand slaves escaped from areas throughout the South.⁸ In Georgia around five thousand slaves or nearly one-third of the enslaved population escaped. In South Carolina nearly ten thousand slaves fled. In Virginia, estimations run as high as thirty-thousand slaves leaving the state and roughly five thousand evacuating with the British. During the Revolutionary War roughly five percent of the slave population in the South, around sixteen to twenty thousand, escaped to the British; during the War of 1812 the number was nearly four thousand.⁹

⁶Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974): 138-141; Historical Census Browser. 2004. The University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, (Retrieved 2009) <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>>; Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 665-666; Kinshasa, *Emigration vs. Assimilation: Debate in the Antebellum African American Press*, 10; Leon Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961), 66-71.

⁷ John Clarkson, *Clarkson's Mission to America, 1791 – 1792*, edited by Charles Bruce Fergusson, (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1971), 14.

⁸ Sylvia Frey, *Water from Rock: Black Resistance in the Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), 211; Ellen Gibson Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1976), 21; Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings, Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution*, (New York: Ecco, 2006), 8; Egerton, *Death or Liberty*, 151.

⁹ Frey, *Water From Rock*, 86, 211; Egerton, *Death or Liberty*, 129; James St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783 – 1870*, (New York: Africana Publication Company, 1976), 3; Allan Kulikoff, "Uprooted Peoples: Black Migrants in the Age of Revolution," in *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution*, edited by Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, 143-171, (Charlottesville: Published for the United States Capitol Historical Society by the University Press of Virginia 1983,) 144-45; Cassandra Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom : Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty*

Early southern black separatists are distinguished from other escapees during the Revolutionary Era by their radical objective of acquiring land. Every escapee did not possess nor was able to act upon aspirations of becoming an independent settler. Of the tens of thousands of blacks who escaped enslavement in the South during the revolutionary period, roughly three thousand became loyalist settlers and immigrated to Nova Scotia and roughly sixteen hundred left the U.S. at the close of the War of 1812 and immigrated to New Brunswick. Some attempted to settle in England, some in Trinidad or Bermuda; while others were left behind, some even chose to remain in the South and attempt to purchase their freedom.¹⁰

Still some southern escapees chose to stay and fight for their freedom. Around three hundred ex-slaves chose to remain in Georgia after the British evacuation of Savannah in July 1782 and live as maroons in the swamps bordering the Savannah River. Having borne arms for the British during the late War, they used guerilla tactics to avoid capture.¹¹ In American cases the fugitive lifestyle that marronage entailed could be volatile, causing people to immediately uproot and abandon territory. Life as a permanent and independent settler could not be achieved in such conditions and some groups remained primarily migratory communities. Although

(Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 222; John McNish Weiss, *The Merikens: Free Black American Settlers in Trinidad* (London: McNish & Weiss, 2002), 2; Estimations of slaves escaping with the British are not easily discernable. Not all slaves evacuating from the South were recorded. As early as 1776 the British government began relocating ex-slaves to Jamaica and records of evacuees prior to 1782 are uncommon; Ruth H. Whitehead, *The Shelburne Black Loyalists: A Short Biography of All Blacks Emigrating to Shelburne, Nova Scotia after the American Revolution, 1783* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 2000), 18; Egerton, *Death or Liberty*, 200-201.

¹⁰ Sylvia Frey, *Water from Rock*, 193; Harvey Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: the Black Refugees in British North America, 1815 – 1860* (Burlington, Vermont: University of Vermont Press, 2006), 48; Nearly eight hundred black soldiers emigrated to Trinidad after the War of 1812 and were settled in company villages to engage in farming; Weiss, *The Merikens: Black American Settlers in Trinidad*, 13; Between eight hundred and one thousand blacks, many of whom had served mariners or servants of British officers, left between 1781 and 1783 and settled in London; Egerton, 209-210; Pybus, *Epic Journey of Freedom : Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty*, 60; John N. Grant, “Black Immigrants into Nova Scotia, 1776-1815,” *Journal of Negro History* 58 (July 1973): 268.

¹¹ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 174.

maroons and slave runaways held ideologies of freedom, unlike early black separatists they were not always as equally motivated by aspirations of land ownership.¹²

Early black separatist first major attempt to achieve their goals occurred during the Revolutionary Era. Their emergence is tied to British war efforts. Early black separatists in the South did not have the opportunity to initiate an independent separatist movement during this period, but rather used their connections with the British as a resource to become free settlers. The British, for their part, used arguments emphasizing freedom and land in order to induce black participation in their conflicts with the Americans.¹³ Tens of thousands of blacks may have been grateful to simply escape slavery during the chaos of the war, but early separatists were also motivated to help the British by economic considerations. The Dunmore and the Phillipsburg proclamations during the Revolutionary War along with the Cochrane proclamations during the War of 1812 illustrate this fact.¹⁴ Their issuance became the catalyst for southern black participation and one of the defining moments of early black separatism. The British did not commit such grand gestures because of their charitable nature. Rather, they decreed these orders in an effort to increase black support; similarly early black separatists were most likely to participate when induced by practical incentives.

¹² Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783 – 1870*, 18; Frey, 226; Some maroon settlements in colonial Louisiana though fugitive became sedentary and an integrated part of community plantations and towns by fleeing as families, marketing goods, cultivating vegetation, engaging in local social activities. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 202-203; Hugo Prosper Leaming, *Hidden America: Maroons of Virginia and the Carolinas* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), 421.

¹³ Regardless of the presence of a favorable or unfavorable political climate, social movement activity can emerge when supporters mobilize resources and use ideological framing or arguments to encourage participation, Holly McCammon, “Stirring up suffrage sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914,” *Social Forces* (December 2001): 449-481, 469-471.

¹⁴ Lord John Murray, the Royal Governor of Virginia, issued the Dunmore proclamation on November 7, 1775 freeing those slaves who help with the British war effort. British Commander in Chief Sir Henry Clinton issued the Phillipsburg Proclamation in June 30, 1779 and granted land to escaped slaves helping the British; The Cochrane Proclamation, which freed escaped slaves aiding the British and granted them land, was issued by Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Inglis Forrester Cochrane in April 1814.

The Sierra Leone Company was first organized by British philanthropists in the mid 1780s to relieve London of its poor black residents and to encourage the end of the Atlantic slave trade. Instead of highlighting these goals, white abolitionist leaders in the movement used arguments centering on land and freedom in order to attract black participants. David George, an early black separatist, commented on the decision of black residents in Nova Scotia to go to Sierra Leone after an agent of the company and later Governor of the colony, John Clarkson, presented his proposal of land ownership and resettlement in Africa “Then the Governor read the proclamation, which contained what was offered, in case we had a mind willing to go, and the greatest part of us were pleased and willing to go.” Although blacks in the Maritime Provinces did not organize an independent separatist movement, they were not motivated to participate in the colonization movement to Sierra Leone by philanthropic goals, but by practical considerations to improve their livelihoods in Africa. Thomas Peters, another early separatist leader in Nova Scotia, was also motivated to emigrate by the use of frames emphasizing land distribution and greater liberty in Sierra Leone. Through his prior knowledge of the settlement plan, Peters must have been induced to participate in the colonization movement while still living in Nova Scotia, sometime before his arrival in London in 1790 to meet representatives of the company.¹⁵ These considerations speak to the importance of material interests among early black separatists during the Revolutionary Era and the circumstances prompting them to act collectively.

¹⁵ David George, *An Account of the Life of Mr. David George, from Sierra Leone in Africa; Given by Himself in a Conversation with Brother Rippon of London, and Brother Pearce of Birmingham, (1793)* in ‘Facing Zion, Facing Forward’: *First Writers of the Black Atlantic, 1785-1798* Edited by Joanna Brooks and John Saillant, Pgs: 177-190, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 188; Gibson, *The Loyal Blacks*, 139-140, 177-178.

During this period blacks in both the North and the South increased racial solidarity by overcoming ethnic differences and identifying themselves singularly as Africans.¹⁶ Similarly, slaves and free blacks also unified and overcame class differences as the universal denial of rights by race became more engrained throughout the South and the nation. Although some blacks may have emigrated for reasons of social mobility, they expressed a culturally ideological emphasis on colonization that was not vigorously endorsed by the agriculturally employed masses of ex-slaves and poor free blacks in the South. Lott Cary was born a slave in Virginia in 1780, but had worked to buy his freedom. A promising young minister, the First Baptist Church of Richmond, an interracial congregation, sponsored his trip to Liberia as a missionary. Although emigrating for the expressed purpose of religious evangelism, he also held aspirations of personal achievement, explaining how emigration would allow him more opportunities.¹⁷ The exact number of free blacks emigrating during the revolutionary period is unclear. Historians James and Lois Walker suggest that approximately 30% or around one thousand of the blacks evacuated from New York in 1783 were not former slaves who deserted their owners.¹⁸

Although professional free black emigrants like Lott Cary were the exception and formed a small minority during the early years of the American Republic, their views were often the most publicized. Early southern black separatists were usually ex slaves. This proto peasantry of slaves and ex slaves also included some skilled and unskilled free black tradesman. Runaway slaves who escaped during the chaos caused by war had little or no money with few if any valuable possessions. As slaves by definition, they were confined to the bottom of the social strata. The free black population was more significantly stratified encompassing low level

¹⁶ Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Culture in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry*, 459; Kinshasa, 13-14; Walker, *The Black Loyalists*, 57.

¹⁷ Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 189.

¹⁸ Alexander X. Byrd, *Captives and Voyagers: Black Migrants Across the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World* (Baton Rouge : Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 155, Walker, 3.

laborers and highly valued skilled artisans. During this period the South was home to approximately one hundred thousand free blacks, who were the fastest growing population in the South. The numbers of free blacks evacuated to Nova Scotia may be over estimated as some may have mislead authorities in order to escape owners who may possibly try and reclaim them.¹⁹

The first groups of immigrants who arrived in Nova Scotia in the early 1780s were primarily field hands from the Chesapeake and the low country. During the mid 1810s many black refugees emigrating to New Brunswick were also originally from Georgia and the low country. Emigrants were mostly field hands, with some being employed as skilled blacksmiths, sawyers, carpenters, servants, or masons. Women also served as house servants, weavers, and spinners.²⁰ Most of the early black separatists emigrating to Sierra Leone in 1791 described themselves as farmers. Because of the lack of opportunities to own land in Nova Scotia, most were forced to work for wages as carpenters, barbers, shoemakers, bakers, saddlers, tailors, weavers, and spinners. Literacy among the black immigrants to Nova Scotia was not recorded by the British and it is unknown the number of those who could read or write. Estimations for literate persons traveling on to Sierra Leone are very low, but not unusual for black southerners during the period, numbering no more than a dozen out of more than a thousand.²¹

Social movements that are composed of participants primarily from one socio-economic class tend to have class based goals.²² Early black separatists who participated in the British evacuations to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were generally from the lower class and

¹⁹ Egerton, 206; Kinshasa, 18.

²⁰ Frey, 193; Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: the Black Refugees in British North America, 1815 – 1860*, 38-39.

²¹ Mary Louise Clifford, *From Slavery to Freetown: Free Black Loyalists after the American Revolution* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 1999): 97; Christopher Fyfe, Editor, *Our Children Free and Happy: Letters from Black Settlers in Africa* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 69.

²² H. Svi Shapiro, "Radical Movements, Ideology, and the Sociology of Educational Ideas," *Social Praxis* 6 (1979): 193-194; W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935,) 145-148, 248.

expressed class based goals centering on land ownership and freedom. Runaway slaves were not concerned with either British or American nationalism, but were motivated by self interest. For enslaved blacks the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 were largely rebellions against slavery. Slaves took advantage of political events, tactfully choosing competing nations/groups with which to ally themselves in order to gain independence. British slaves could ally with Spain to gain freedom through religious sanctuary, while Spanish slaves allied themselves with the British and gained freedom through military service.²³ During these conflicts southern slaves were able to seize the opportunity to free themselves, while their proslavery government experienced a national crisis.

The British picked up many runaway slaves who paddled to their ships anchored offshore.²⁴ In 1779 Mr. Gadde of Halifax, North Carolina placed an advertisement in a Charleston newspaper for the capture of his runaway slave, Abraham. Abraham was only sixteen years old when he escaped, but must have already been an experienced seaman and very articulate. Mr. Gadde believed that if Abraham was not “lurking near the wharf,” he had undoubtedly, because of his knowledge of the sea and his mastery of the English language, secured a place on board a vessel. During the War of 1812 Joseph and Daniel Spuses worked as a farmer and sawyer respectively. The pair escaped from their owners along with a shoemaker, a laborer, and four farmers. All of the escapees were picked up by the British off the Chesapeake in an open boat in September 1813 presumably bringing with them whatever they could carry. The refugees were allowed to board the ship *Rifleman* and settle in New Brunswick.²⁵ Although

²³ Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border*, 32; Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 96, 120-121.

²⁴ Egerton, *Death or Liberty*, 209-210.

²⁵ “List of American Slaves Deserted from the Enemy on Board his Majesty’s Sloop Rifleman, 28th September 1814,” RG 420, Reel 15464, CPR, NSARM; 3 March 1779, Charleston, South Carolina, *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Black Loyalist Database, Nova Scotia Museum.

operating during chaotic conditions of war, they nonetheless chose their own paths to freedom. Their goal of becoming profitable land owners, however, would prove more difficult.

For early black separatists freedom and land ownership were the primary objectives. A particular location was of secondary importance as is evident through the decision of southern blacks to emigrate during the revolutionary period to such distinct places as Nova Scotia, Trinidad, New Brunswick, Spanish Florida and eventually Sierra Leone in order to obtain them. However, most blacks leaving the South during the Revolutionary Era went as slaves belonging to loyalist owners and were powerless in determining where they would relocate.

Many times runaway slaves and poor free blacks also had little choice regarding when, where and in what manner to embark.²⁶ Even though operating in these types of restrictions, southern blacks nonetheless exercised whatever agency they could when deciding what avenues to take towards liberty. Runaway slaves from the American colonies during the Revolutionary War who chose not to become maroons or evacuate with the British could also become free by receiving religious sanctuary in Spanish Florida by conversion to Catholicism. The ex-slaves who chose to escape to Florida were sailors, soldiers, butchers, servants, shoemakers, tanners, fieldhands, and various other skilled and unskilled occupations.²⁷ Perhaps Jacob W. Harvey's slave was previously employed in one of these occupations when she chose to run away in 1779 South Carolina. Harvey believed his female slave would try to pass for free and head south, possibly to the well known sanctuary for ex-slaves, St. Augustine, Florida. The unnamed woman may have chosen to try her chances with the Spanish instead of waiting on the coming British invasion of Charleston which would not occur until the following year.

²⁶ Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*, 122.

²⁷ Jane Landers, "Acquisition and Loss on the Spanish Frontier: Free Black Homesteaders of Florida, 1784-1821" in *Against the Odds: Free Blacks in the Slave Societies of the Americas* pgs: 85-101, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 89-92.

Runaway slaves Saby and Harriet probably could never have passed for free as the married couple did not even speak broken English. They were probably helped in their escape by Sam and his wife Nanny, who were expecting a child, and who had a better command of the English language. All four escaped along with another slave family, Syfax and Tenah, from the Charleston area in April 1783 and were presumed by authorities to be headed toward St. Augustine.²⁸ The group of nine travelled with several children, a fact which perhaps influenced their choice or inability to run away together before the British evacuation in 1782. Although the Spain did not regain authority of Florida until 1784, the escaped slaves must have been aware of the coming change in government. Governor Vicente Manuel de Céspedes y Velasco of Spanish Florida doubted runaway slaves' claims of religious sanctuary as their motivating reason for joining the remote Spanish colony, but honored their requests nonetheless. He also honored the requests for land ownership made by almost all of Spain's new black subjects shortly after their arrival.²⁹

Historian Alexander Byrd argues that after the Revolutionary War blacks were left with "a sense of independence and enfranchisement."³⁰ For black southerners these principals formed the basis of a separatist ideology primarily based upon independence through the acquisition of land and enfranchisement through the acquisition of civil rights.³¹ Benjamin Roberts had already been employed by Jonathan Bliss, the Chief Justice of New Brunswick for nearly a year by the winter of 1815. Land requests by black emigrants were not prioritized by the government and many in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were coerced to work for wages instead of becoming

²⁸ 26 April 1783, Charleston, South Carolina, *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, BLD, NSM.

²⁹ The government of Spain discontinued religious sanctuary for slaves after 1790; Landers, "Acquisition and Loss on the Spanish Frontier: Free Black Homesteaders of Florida, 1784-1821," in *Against the Odds: Free Blacks in the Slave Societies of the Americas*, 89-92.

³⁰ Byrd, *Captives and Voyagers: Black Migrants across the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World*, 165.

³¹ Sociologist Mayer N. Zald defines ideological concerns as belief systems defending and attacking current social relations and the social system. Mayer N. Zald, "Ideologically Structured Action: An Enlarged Agenda for Social Movement Research," *Mobilization* 5 no. 1 (Spring 2000): 3-4.

independent land owners because of the government's lethargic pace when considering their proposals. The following spring in 1816 Roberts was finally granted ten acres of land to establish a homestead. The plots of land granted to him formerly belonged to Martin Shier and were granted by the government to other black refugees from the War of 1812 through escheat. Although very excited about the government's grant and relocating to the all black township commonly referred to as Refugee Hill in May 1816, Roberts, his wife, and their five children still could not begin cultivating the land, because they had not yet received government provisions.³²

Refugee Hill was a small community to the northwest of Halifax where many blacks from the United States settled after the War of 1812. The Roberts and around fifty other new black settler families moved to the community in 1816. Five new families, mostly husbands and wives, had settled upon lands and had begun farming by the summer. The Robert's family had to wait until the fall to settle on their land and despite the harsh climate by October, Benjamin, who is described as "decent and industrious" managed to build a house and make numerous improvements. By the end of 1816 seventy six families lived at Refugee Hill and by 1818 that number had increased by ten.³³ Although the Roberts family was delayed, they ultimately achieved their goal of becoming free land owners.

Land ownership is a fundamental objective of southern black separatism and early separatists worked extremely hard to make sustain themselves through agriculture. Numerous black loyalists had also settled in the community of Preston after the Revolutionary War, but had

³² Henry H. Cogswell, Halifax, 15 May 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 54, CPR, NSARM; C. B. Fergusson, *The Establishment of Negroes in Nova Scotia Between The War of 1812 and The Winning of Responsible Government* (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1948), "License to Men of Colour at Refugee Hill, 27 March 1818," 87; Fergusson, *The Establishment of Negroes in Nova Scotia*, 55.

³³ "List of Refugee Negroes located on Lands on the Northwest of Melville Island," RG 419, Reel 15460, number 65, CPR, NSARM; "List of Refugee Negroes Located on the Lands on Prospect Road," 1 July 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, 64, CPR, NSARM; W. Wusting ?, Halifax, 5 October 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 68; T. Chamberlain, "Inclosing an Account for Surveying Lands for People of Colour Settled in Preston," 12 August 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 53, CPR, NSARM.

emigrated with the Sierra Leone Company in 1792, leaving many areas unsettled and unimproved. After the government issued land grants to blacks in Preston after the War of 1812 the community grew rapidly. By 1816 most of the black refugees settled at Preston, who were granted lots of land by the government, had built huts, and many homes and had already cleared at least ¼ an acre. Of the more than two hundred new residents in the community, only eight men were described as “doing nothing” having failed to clear any land or build huts.³⁴

All black families emigrating to Nova Scotia or New Brunswick did not achieve their dream of self-sufficiency. The land allotted to black settlers was often area with rocky, swampy or infertile soil. When Samuel Head visited Preston residents in February 1816 he found the dwellings of many families had no cellars in their homes, and some had no floors. Head warned that unless the settlers were given medical assistance some “will be very liable to acute diseases of the country.” He was particularly concerned about women in the settlement some of whom had not received any medical treatment. One woman was so severely exhausted from inflammation of the lungs, Head doubted if she would live much longer. He doubted if another woman would survive the night, as she was in the final stages of consumption. He asked the government for basic necessities for the settlers such as clothes and medicine.³⁵ Head’s concerns were not exaggerated. Numerous new black settlers in the province were succumbing to various kinds of diseases daily.

Samuel Jenkins and Thomas Butler entered the poor house hospital in Halifax in July 1816. Butler was originally from the Chesapeake area and traveled from the black town of Hammond Plains in Nova Scotia. Jenkins was discharged from the black hospital operated by the nearby refugee facility on Melville Island with an order to receive rations for up to three

³⁴ “Report of Lands Cleared by People of Color in the Settlement of Preston,” Preston, 9 May 1816, RG 421, Reel 15464, number 3, CPR, NSARM.

³⁵ Samuel Head to Charles Morris, Halifax, 15 February 1816, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number 47, CPR, NSARM.

months upon his transfer. At forty-five years old Jenkins suffered from ulcers and lay stationary in the black hospital for seventy-nine days. Many of the other patients at the hospital also had ulcers on their feet also suffering problems related to frost bite. In September, John Lawson a Commissioner of the poor wrote authorities on behalf of Jenkins who had already stayed in the poor house hospital in Halifax for six months without receiving provisions. Lawson did not request any rations for Butler, because the patient died on August 27th, having never receiving provisions from the government.³⁶

The lack of provisions from the government was an ongoing problem for black settlers. The Chairman of the Commissioner of the Poor wrote local authorities in the hopes of influencing the government to provide new refugees with provisions. Although able to work in the growing season, as the avenues for black employment ended, thefts were becoming increasingly common. Regarding the settlers he lamented that if the government would simply offer provisions “until the Spring opens, and employment to be had, then they will be enabled, when in Health, to make ample provisions for themselves and families.” The Chairman’s premonitions seem to be fairly accurate. Theft was a leading crime among black inhabitants in the province. Between 1784-95 authorities in Shelburne County, Nova Scotia prosecuted over twenty cases involving blacks burglarizing or stealing property.³⁷

Such were the conditions faced by Thomas Peters and other black loyalists living in the Maritime Provinces when they first decided that Peters would go to England in order to inquire

³⁶ Robert Soles to John Robb, 16 May 1816, “Names, Ages, Diseases, Present State of Black Hospital, Melville Island,” RG 421, Reel 15464, CPR, NSARM; John Lawson, Halifax, 20 September 1916, “A List of Black Refugees Received at Poor House Hospital at Halifax from the Military Hospital and Melville Island under the Direction of the Commissioner of the Poor” RG 419, Reel 15460, number 66, CPR, NSARM; Cooper, Halifax, Halifax, 13 August 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 62, CPR, NSARM; Thomas Johnson, Halifax, 13 August 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 63; John Lawson, Halifax, 13 August 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 63.

³⁷ Illegible print Schulman, Chairman Commissioner of the Poor, 5 March 1815, RG 420, Reel 15464, number 132, CPR, NSARM; Black Loyalists in Shelburne County Court Cases, Nova Scotia Court of General Sessions, 1784-1795,” BLD, NSM.

about improving their condition. As the first person from Nova Scotia to question the British government about a black settlement in Africa, Thomas Peters is considered to be one of the most important founding fathers of Sierra Leone. It is unclear whether Peters was born in Africa or Wilmington, North Carolina. In 1776 he escaped the plantation of William Campbell in Wilmington and ran away to join the British army during the Revolutionary War. A close inspection of his writings reveals the desires of early black separatists working with the British. In 1791 he wrote on behalf of himself and other black soldiers in a petition to Secretary of State in London, William Greenville, “That your memorialist and the said other Black Pioneers, having served in North America as foresaid, for the space of seven years and upwards during the late war, afterwards went to Nova Scotia, under the promise of obtaining the usual grants of land and provisions.”³⁸ Peter’s writings indicate that land acquisition was a primary goal for separatists even before leaving America during British evacuations. While this correspondence suggests that this objective was formed in the American colonies, this goal was most documented among loyalist and refugee blacks once in Nova Scotia.

Black southerners supported separatism because of reasons of self-sufficiency and were not motivated by religious, national, or cultural allegiance. The petition of Thomas Peters and the other Black Pioneers residing in Nova Scotia went on to declare, “That some part however of the said Black people are earnestly desiring of obtaining their due allotment of land and remaining in America, but others are ready and willing to go whenever the wisdom of Government may think proper to provide for them as free subjects of the British Empire.”³⁹

Black loyalists residing in Nova Scotia like Peters did not choose to emigrate to Sierra Leone

³⁸ Clifford, *From Slavery to Freetown: Black Loyalists After the American Revolution*, 26; John Clarkson, *Clarkson’s Mission to America, 1791 – 1792* Edited by Charles Bruce Fergusson (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1971), 31; The Black Pioneers was a black British army regiment during the Revolutionary War.

³⁹ Clarkson, *Clarkson’s Mission to America, 1791 – 1792*, 32.

because of cultural/ethnic identity nor did they choose to emigrate to Nova Scotia because of national loyalty. Neither were they not motivated by religious doctrine.

The secretary of state for the home department Henry Dundas wrote on behalf of Thomas Peters when he described the dire situation of blacks in need of land in Nova Scotia to Lieutenant Governor John Parr in 1791. Dundas requested land be granted to the black settlers or assistance given to those choosing to emigrate to Sierra Leone. Although Dundas' letter did not completely halt the negligence of officials in Nova Scotia regarding land distribution to blacks, his elevated social status ensured that his endorsement of Peters' group and declaration that "grants of land, promised to them, may be immediately granted," would carry greater authority than any similar statement by black residents could.⁴⁰

Sierra Leone began as an independent settlement organized by the Committee for the Relief of the Poor and the English government in 1787. By 1790 the original black emigrants from London at Granville Town had dispersed due to conflicts with Temne, the native inhabitants of the region. The Sierra Leone Company was the second attempt at organizing a black British settlement in West Africa and markedly more organized. It was to be an official crown colony and several notable British abolitionist figures such as Thomas Clarkson, Granville Sharp, and William Wilberforce invested in the company.⁴¹ John Clarkson, naval officer and brother of Thomas Clarkson, became the company's primary agent and travelled back with Peters to Nova Scotia to recruit participants. Stephen Skinner was a resident of the province and an acquaintance of John Clarkson. In a letter to the Dundas, Skinner commented on the reasons surrounding the black exodus to Sierra Leone,

Evidently many of them were motivated not solely by their distress. I am persuaded that nothing but the imaginary prospect of a fine healthy climate, the extreme fertility of the soil and the very general invitation

⁴⁰ Clarkson, 33; Henry Dundas to Lieutenant Governor Parr, Whitehall, London, England, 3 August 1791.

⁴¹ Gibson, *The Loyal Blacks*, 170-171, 183.

which the late Governor's Proclamation held out to them, were the true motives that induced them to emigrate.⁴²

In Sierra Leone early black separatists believed they could become economically self-sufficient through land ownership on productive lands free from the discriminatory practices of local white authorities that inhibited them earning a livelihood.

On the eve of the 1797 departure for Sierra Leone, the government had granted land to only a small minority of black residents in Nova Scotia. By this time only around eleven percent of the 3,550 black loyalists transported to Nova Scotia received land. In black settlement of Birchtown authorities granted 184 black land recipients an average of about 34 acres; in Brindley Town 76 grantees received about 1 acre; in Little Tracadie 74 blacks settled on farms averaging 40 acres; in Preston the average number of acres granted to 51 blacks was 50 acres; and in Chedabucto three hundred black settlers were granted around 20 acres of land each.⁴³ With so few blacks able to achieve their dreams of becoming self-sufficient land owners in Nova Scotia, it is not surprising that many decided to take their chances in Sierra Leone and attempt to become independent proprietors in the new African colony.

One potential emigrant to Sierra Leone revealed his practical motivations of obtaining land when discussing whether to leave Nova Scotia with John Clarkson of the by commenting

it would be unwise, in his opinion for many of them to think of remaining in the Province even if they were certain of having their full proportion of land granted to them, the most advantageous situation, for he said – had we received our allotments of land upon our arrival in this Province from the States of America, when we were allowed provisions for three years with implements of husbandry, as well as arms [and] ammunition we might have cultivated our lots to advantage, and by the time our provisions were stopped the lands of industrious men would have been in such a state of improvement as to have seemed to them comfortable to support; on the contrary, instead of receiving our promised and proper allotments upon our arrival in the province, the greatest part of us have received small allotments in a soil so over run with crocks and swamp that vegetation with our utmost care is barely sufficient to keep us in existence.⁴⁴

⁴² Clarkson, 26; Stephen Skinner to Henry Dundas, Colonial Office 217/63, ff. 357-60 is referenced.

⁴³ Clifford, 63.

⁴⁴ Clarkson, 58-59.

Southern black separatists wanted to leave the South in order to be free from overt racial discrimination and in order to acquire land. The primary reason for leaving Nova Scotia was the systematic denial of farm land to black settlers. By 1791 most had only been given small one acre plots of land in town upon which to construct small dwellings and raise family gardens, provisions not sufficient enough to create an independent livelihood through agricultural production.⁴⁵ Upon departing for Sierra Leone one of the foremost concerns for settlers was the distribution of land once in the colony. Black settlers were unwilling to pay for rations and quarters upon arrival in Sierra Leone, believing instead that the majority of them would be able to pay their debts from the crops produced through farming.⁴⁶

Land always remained a crucial part of the separatist agenda. Although many blacks gained freedom by joining the British during the Revolutionary Era, freedom was not enough. Soldiers could not be persuaded to stay in the army solely by British promises of military promotion or mobility. While many blacks in Nova Scotia were excited about the news regarding John Clarkson and the Sierra Leone Company, far less excitement was shown over the 1791 recruitment efforts of Lieutenant Francis M. Miller to enlist black men into the Black Carolina Corps serving in the West Indies. Even with the promise of equal pay, rations, and quarters, black settlers could not be enticed away from their dream of becoming landowners.⁴⁷ The majority of servicemen preferred to relocate to a British colony and hold the government to its original land agreements. Separatists wanted to both economic and political self determination and would not tolerate anything less.

⁴⁵ Clarkson, 21.

⁴⁶ Beverhout Company, 26 June 1792, in Fyfe, *Our Children Free & Happy: Letters from Black Settlers in Africa*, 25.

⁴⁷ "Black Carolina Corps," 1 November 1791, Halifax, Nova Scotia, *Royal Gazette and The Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 4, BLD, NSM.

Service in the army was a means to an end. Southern blacks primarily joined the army in order to gain freedom and land and not because of national loyalty. Most of the black men serving in the military during the War of 1812 could not be swayed from abandoning one of their original goals of land acquisition. In 1813 William Phillips was only fifteen years old when he “took the oath of Allegiance and fought against the Americans” in the British Navy under Admiral Alexander Cochrane. Perhaps Phillips served because of his national loyalty to Great Britain. His actions following the war do not, however support this view. Phillips was born in Gloucester, Virginia and was probably familiar with tobacco farming. By twenty-two years he was already a widow when he applied for a land grant in Sunbury County, New Brunswick in 1820. Like many other soldiers serving in the War of 1812 Phillips did not choose to continue to serve in the Navy once the war is over, but like numerous other black loyalists and refugees, primarily sought to upon their discharge obtain land, upon which to settle and hopefully profit.⁴⁸ Although administrative delay, neglect, and even discrimination may have caused their dissatisfaction and frustration with the British government to wax and wane, their desire for self determination through liberty and land never subsided.

Samuel Wells was one of the few black men in New Brunswick who owned a substantial amount of land. Originally born in Virginia, he was able to purchase fifty acres in the province after serving with the British military during the Revolutionary War. After residing in the province for eleven years, his family had grown substantially, so that by 1825 the land could no longer support his eight children. He petitioned the Governor Howard Douglas along with two companions from Ireland and Scotland, to grant them each three hundred acres in addition to the land they already owned. His aspirations were greater than sustenance farming; rather he sought

⁴⁸ Petition on behalf of William Phillips, 5 November 1820, Fredricton, “Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783-1854,” ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Phillips_William_1820_01. RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick; Weiss, 10.

to build a large agricultural enterprise ensuring greater independence for himself and his offspring.⁴⁹ Wells was able to achieve the goal of land ownership held by thousands of black separatists. They, like Wells, committed to participate in British military conflicts against the Americans primarily to achieve this objective and chose not to remain in the army after the War. Although working under the direction of the British, these early southern black emigrants should nonetheless be viewed as part of the black separatist tradition.

Although emigrating as free persons, early black separatists had to operate under the British government and were primarily subject to its authority. Their cooperation with the British was one of necessity but should not negate the radical nature of their aspirations to become equal British subjects and independent land owners. Social movements require a level of cooperation with an elite group in order to achieve broad social goals or changes.⁵⁰ Early black separatists served as spies, soldiers, guides, servants, laborers, and in various other capacities during the two British wars with the Americans. Othello and Mary Ann, two runaway slaves from South Carolina, probably served the British in at least one of these capacities. Both ran away from their masters during the summer of 1779. Mary Ann was spotted aboard Major Butler's ship along with other "boat negroes" and Othello had been seen with the British army. Both were believed to still be in Charleston and working with the British.⁵¹ Although thousands of southern blacks helped the British during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, their loyalty should not be wholly attributed to patriotism. Because of their limited power in the U.S.,

⁴⁹ Petition of Behalf of John Beckett, 5 December 1825, Fredricton, "Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783–1854," ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Beckett_John_1825_01.RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

⁵⁰ Resource mobilization theory argues that support for movement participants through various forms of resources held by elites outside the movement's mass base are of critical importance to its achievement of socially centered goals. McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970*, 41.

⁵¹ Schama, *Rough Crossings, Britain, the slaves and the American Revolution*, 4; Weiss, 5; 11 August 1779, Charlestown, South Carolina, *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Runaway Slave Ads, BLD, NSM; 25 August 1779, Charlestown, South Carolina, *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Runaway Slave Ads, BLD, NSM.

early black separatists in the South used British authority to support not only their freedom, but later to achieve goals for land acquisition.

Like the masses of ex-slaves escaping behind British lines, early black separatists also wanted freedom, but are distinguished from the majority of ex-slaves by their resolute desire for land. In 1812 British Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane wrote to his friend Robert Dundas, Lord Melville, the first Lord of the British Admiralty, speaking hopefully about Virginia's black population and their willingness to serve as soldiers, commenting that "they are British in their hearts."⁵² Cochrane's simple assessment of the blacks' commitment to the British cause was misinformed. Some blacks in the South supported the British during the War of 1812, as during the Revolutionary War, however, this initial support was not because of their love for Great Britain. In most instances blacks were British loyalists and refugees because they perceived it to be in their self-interest. Ex-slaves expressed earnest loyalty to the British only when they felt their freedom was secure.

The actions of early black separatists, when considered with their petitions, present a more thorough portrait of their most sincere desires. Sally Pone and several others waited until boarding the ship for departure to Sierra Leone in 1791, before expressing her grievances with the regulations of the Sierra Leone Company and colonization leaders. Peter Richardson, a black emigrant witnessing her outburst reported,

She says that she do not care for you and I nor for Any of the laws thart Is made by your Orders for Sir this Morning There was some Of the People that did not behave And did what was not Agreeable to the Rules of this Woman Sally Pone came in when we was examining them And She say what I have mention Obove And not only but call us a pack of Deavils And mention many Experssions that was very scandious.⁵³

⁵² Quoted in Weiss, 7.

⁵³ Peter Richardson, Halifax, Nova Scotia. 12 January 1792 in Jones, 23.

Pone was cunning in that she did not overtly display her distaste for colonization leaders or their policies until after her passage to Sierra Leone was already secured. With this act she reveals her allegiance not to England or a person, but to her own goals of independence.

The United Kingdom offered for many the quickest and safest means to freedom and with it the promise of self sufficiency. Blacks also sought refuge however by forming separate communities within American borders. In 1813 South Carolina a group of armed maroons formed a formidable force against local authorities in the Colleton District. That year the legislature agreed to appropriate state funds in order to pay the expenses incurred for their capture. The local white inhabitants argued that the presence of fugitive blacks made the “rendering of the navigation of the rivers and creeks therein excessively dangerous, owing to the depredations of this Banditti furnished as they are with boats thereon.”⁵⁴ Although some black escapees chose to become maroons such a way of life could prove extremely volatile. For early black separatists such an existence was ill-suited to their dream of legitimate independence and increased rights. The acquisition of a black free state in the U.S. was highly unlikely during the years surrounding the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 and although freedom could be obtained through escape to Spanish Florida, northern states, maroonism, cooperation with Indian Nations or even cooperation with the Americans, the legal freedom guaranteed by the British was viewed by many to be less precarious.⁵⁵ Separatists’ loyalties rested on more than manumission. They sought freedom through economic security, while ideological causes such as nationalism were of secondary importance.

⁵⁴ “Grand Jury presentment from Colleton District, November 1813, and the General Assembly Response,” in Timothy James Lockley, Editor, *Maroon Communities in South Carolina: A Documentary Record* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina, 2009,) 79-80.

⁵⁵ Whitfield, 18-19; Walker, *The Black Loyalist*, 4-5, Weiss, 4; Some runaway slaves allied with the Seminole Indian Nation in Florida and lived in sedentary villages and farms. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, 178-179, 195-196.

The motivations of both parties, the British and black separatists, are not plainly discernable. Southern blacks were not initially motivated to support the British by national loyalty and the British were not initially motivated to liberate escaped slaves in America by humanitarianism. Both groups sought to benefit practically through cooperating with the other; blacks sought freedom and economy, the British psychological and military advantage. Although tens of thousands of slaves were able to escape to freedom during the chaos resulting from American conflicts with the British, the British themselves were at best uncommitted to universal black emancipation.

In 1768 Governor Charles Montagu of South Carolina considered the potential power of runaway slaves in countering the planter class. In 18th century South Carolina hundreds or perhaps thousands of black slaves escaped to the back country living in the swamps surrounding plantations and towns. Pioneer planters and black maroons clashed as the planter's demands for land increased and the land available to maroons decreased. Perhaps in an effort to curb colonial power, Governor Montagu denounced and prosecuted planter pioneers, while exonerating and pardoning convicted maroons. The maroons affirmed their new freedom and loyalty by declaring themselves "The Friends of the Governor" and committing themselves to England's service.⁵⁶ The supportive relationship between Governor Montagu and the maroons was forged because of mutual convenience and gain. Such exchanges also characterized the relationship between the British and American slaves during the Revolutionary Era.

The Dunmore and the Philipsburg Proclamations issued during the Revolutionary War, like the Cochrane Proclamation issued during the War of 1812, which declared that any escaping slaves who aided the British militarily would be protected, subsequently freed, and given the

⁵⁶ Leaming, *Hidden America*, 404-408; 433-434; Timothy James Lockley, *Maroon Communities in South Carolina: A Documentary Record*, 6-7; During the years 1763-1784 England legally possessed Florida through cessation from Spain, consequently freedom through religious sanctuary was unavailable.

option of becoming settlers, must be viewed in the context of isolation, and to be proclaimed by an empire still heavily invested in slavery. The British did not attempt to free the slaves of loyalist owners nor any other slaves in its colonies. Their support for the emancipation of American slaves was only championed during times of war, when it was perceived to be advantageous to British armed forces.

During the British occupation of Charleston Prince Bass was returned to his master Samuel Bass by the Quartermaster General's Department in 1781. During military conflicts the British returned slaves to loyalist owners or even to sold them to new ones; practices serving ultimately to further betray black hopes for equitable treatment by whites. Prince Bass was a carpenter and perhaps was employed as such by the British before they learned of his origins. Despite being returned, Bass escaped for a second time and was spotted around town near the same Quartermaster's Yard where he was previously detained.⁵⁷ The British temporarily overlooked their commitment to slavery when they needed black guides and pilots to navigate the American terrain, soldiers and knowledgeable spies to counter American forces, laborers and servants to build fortresses and see to the needs of officials, and the fear of black military service and emancipation to serve as a psychological tactic against American society.⁵⁸

Disregarding the empire's commitment to slavery, southern blacks still had just reason for not embracing British subjecthood whole heartedly. Although Blacks were protected by the Crown, they remained second class citizens and their concerns were likewise of secondary importance. It took Adam Wise nearly thirty years to be granted land in New Brunswick. Originally from Virginia, Wise emigrated to the province in 1790 "in the family of Colonel Ellegood." He was given permission to settle upon two hundred acres of land in 1820 by a

⁵⁷ 21 March 1781, Charleston, South Carolina, *Royal Gazette*, BLD, NSM; Frey, 131, 155; Weiss, 5.

⁵⁸ Walker, 1-2; Weiss, 5-6.

government surveyor and by 1827 had already cleared twenty acres. However after some investigation, Wise learned that his application had never been filed. This oversight may have been simply a clerical error; however, it is indicative of the widespread lackadaisical attitude of the government toward its black petitioners.⁵⁹

Perhaps because of their prior experiences dealing with the British during wartime and peace, many early black separatists doubted their sincerity and honesty of their claims of assistance. Of the emigrants to Sierra Leone, Clarkson remarked, “how fearful the whole were of settling into debt, and that they questioned me closely relative to the assistance to be given them to enable them to support their families at Sierra Leone without borrowing money.”⁶⁰ Emigrants were weary of broken promises and feared being controlled by debt once they had taken residence in the colony. They wanted to ensure that they would be able to maintain a livelihood based upon land ownership and agricultural production and not be confined to perpetual servitude by indebtedness.

Racial discrimination and lack of authority compelled southern blacks to work within British parameters in order to achieve their goals. Despite the inability to organize independently during this early period and being constantly subjected to the whims of British authority, black separatists never ceased to express their desire for liberty and land. This interracial strategy of working with empowered groups of whites to achieve goals would continue to characterize southern black separatism throughout the nineteenth century.

In 1815 Anthony Williams was living on land conveyed to him by Henry Cogswell who certified that Williams, along with three other families, were actively engaged in farming. The

⁵⁹ Petition of Black Loyalists in New Brunswick 1783-1854; Petition of Adam Wise, 27 September 1827, Fredricton ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Wise_Adam_1823_05.RS108: Index to Land Petition: O Series, 1783-1919, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

⁶⁰ Clarkson, 47.

fact that the Williams had another child the following year supports the idea that the couple was able to make a sustainable living despite the widespread racial discrimination taking place in the province. Aaron Williams and Richard McArthur also used the strategy of white sponsorship and interracial cooperation to acquire provisions and land. As early as 1815 the two were conveyed land near Beaver Bank in New Brunswick by John Rule and by September 1816 the pair requested their second round of six month provisions from the government. Although Williams and McArthur had made considerable improvements to the land in the six months prior, clearing several acres, cultivating wheat, building a bridge, as well as erecting a private and public road, the two still probably felt they would need Rule's help when requesting additional provisions. Rule's praises regarding their "ingenious and industrious" character had limited success as the two men were subsequently granted provisions for only three months.⁶¹

Often the relationship between early black separatists and whites embodied a patron client understanding.⁶² During the British evacuation from New York slaves had to present certificates of freedom signed by Brigadier General Samuel Birch. Many did not hold certificates, but did travel with British officers; a characteristic, which some ex-slaves reasonably thought, would increase their chances of approval. While in Charleston, early black separatist, David George carried a pass signed by the town adjunct certifying that he was "a good subject to King George" and a "Free Negro Man." His wife, Phillis worked as a laundress for General Henry Clinton. George also came to know Colonel Brown, who subsequently arranged his release from the city jail. Although George had spent only about three years in Charleston, his social connections benefited him immensely. He was also befriended by General James

⁶¹ "Name of men of Colour who are settled upon Lands conveyed to them by Henry H. Cogswell which Lands are located at the Head of the North West Arm," Halifax, 2 November 1815, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number 93, 94, CP, NSARM; John Rule, 26 December 1815, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number 43, CP, NSARM; John Rule, Halifax, 30 September 1816, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 67, CP, NSARM.

⁶² Byrd, 160, 177-178.

Paterson. In his autobiography, George writes about his closeness to General Patterson, with whom he travelled with to Nova Scotia, commenting that he “was very kind to me.” While contemplating where to go during the evacuation, George took the advice of his new comrade and decided to emigrate to the maritime province. He understood the significance of such an opportunity for former slaves and was undeniably thankful for British generosity in granting him and “the few blacks” who travelled with them their freedom and land without payment.⁶³

During this period Boston King was also living in Charleston and was a servant of Captain Grey. King aided the Captain for about a year, before the two parted ways. Now working with another regiment, when the British were forced to abandon a camp because of an American attack, King was left behind. He walked twenty-four miles to alert British reinforcements and immediately sought out Captain Grey upon his return. After this feat, the Captain showered King with accolades but little else and he was eventually re-enslaved while attempting to evacuate to New York. While in Staten Island, however, King escaped, and though receiving little material gain from the British for his service, upon reciting his tale to the British commanding officer in New York, he was issued a passport, allowed to come into British lines and eventually approved for emigration to Nova Scotia.⁶⁴ All three persons, King, Phillis, and George were able to emigrate in part, because of the assistance offered by British officers with whom they had formed a bond.

Only blacks who were socially acceptable to whites were allowed to participate in the colonization movement to Sierra Leone. Potential emigrants dare not publically challenge local authority as each had to be officially enrolled and possess certificates of approbation issued by

⁶³ George, *an Account of the Life of Mr. David George*, 182-183; Clifford, 21-22.

⁶⁴ Boston King, *Memoirs of the Life of Boston King, a Black Preacher, Written by Himself, during his Residence at Kingswood-School in ‘Facing Zion, Facing Forward’: First Writers of the Black Atlantic, 1785-1798* Edited by Joanna Brooks and John Saillant, pgs: 177-190, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 214-217; Pybus, 66; Byrd, 160; Clifford, 23-24.

Lieutenant John Clarkson of the Navy or Mr. Lawrence Hart of Halifax in order to embark.

Though perturbed by the threat of white residents, “to refuse certificates of character to force the blacks to remain in the provinces,” Clarkson had been informed of the merits of the provinces’ black residents describing them as sober and honest working men. He was resigned if necessary to make such character assessments himself, commenting that he would issue his own certificate if a potential participant’s “general character be good.”⁶⁵ Colonization leaders used this type of tactfulness, in order to curb repression, a strategy that would continue to be utilized by blacks in the South throughout the nineteenth century.

Early black separatists used the support of whites in both private and public realms in order to fulfill their dreams of becoming land owners. But, often potential black settlers had to be weary of white exploitation. In 1816 John Lynch, Henry Brown and several other black men settled near the black community at Porters Lake in Nova Scotia. Twenty-seven families lived at Porters Lake, which was established on the estate of Rufus Fairbanks. Several men along with their families had worked and lived on Fairbanks’ land for more than a year with the promise of receiving payment and land upon their departure. Before the families left in October 1815, Fairbanks generously offered to allow them to stay the winter on his farm, as it was too late for them to begin erecting homes on their newly granted land. However, amiable relations between the two parties subsided as both alleged discrepancies over provisions and debt.

Fairbanks, believing the families would work at least seven years, had promised them five shillings per acre for cutting down wood in addition to supplying them with provisions. Upon their early departure the Brown and Lynch families were surprised to learn that Henry Brown owed five pounds and John Lynch owed eighteen pounds to Fairbanks for provisions.

⁶⁵ 22 September 1791, Halifax, Nova Scotia, *Royal Gazette of Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 3, BLD, NSM; Byrd, 187; Clarkson, 46.

They were even more shocked when Fairbanks showed them their promised land. It was located in a low swampy area, with small bushes, no road leading to it, with soil unfit for walking, no less building construction and cultivation. Fairbanks must have been offended by the group's refusal to accept his land, after all it was with his help that they had reaped nearly three hundred bushels of potatoes the previous year. He thought that the group would probably settle near the all black community near Preston, currently organized by another proprietor Theophilus Chamberlain and where the government supplied settlers with clothing, tools, and cooking utensils. After the groups' insubordination, Fairbanks' generosity faded. He ceased to supply the black families planning to leave his land with provisions and wrote the Governor Parr questioning his responsibility to do so.⁶⁶ Though having limited power Brown and Lynch used what little agency they possessed to secure the best agreement they could as free settlers.

Brown and Lynch attempted to live at Preston after leaving Fairbanks' land in 1816. Working under the direction of Chamberlain, it appears even these attempts of land ownership by blacks were frustrated. He denounced the previous black loyalists and Jamaican maroons who lived at Preston but ultimately emigrated to Sierra Leone as being "lured away" from their settlements and "discouraged by others," from becoming productive farmers. However, he was very excited about the potential of the black refugees to become independent land owners and add to the small community on his land. Besides offering to sell his own land and that of other interested parties, Chamberlain offered to oversee the land grants, direct the construction of roads, secure transportation of materials, distribute provisions, inspect the work of the settlers, possibly manage a nearby store, and do this work for "ten percent below the usual price of

⁶⁶ Rufus Fairbanks, 30 October 1815, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number. 43, CP, NSARM; Rufus Fairbanks, Halifax, 4 March 1816, RG 421, Reel 15464, CP, NSARM; Untitled document, number 88, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, CP, NSARM; Fergusson, *The Establishment of Negroes in Nova Scotia Between The War of 1812 and The Winning of Responsible Government*, 55-56.

carriage to be estimated by any of the neighbors.” In return he wanted the government to purchase his relinquished acres and grant him additional outlying land. However, conflict soon arose over the settlement another local proprietor, Michael Wallace, who attacked Chamberlain’s motives and character regarding the black settlement.⁶⁷

Despite these misgivings, if Brown and Lynch wished to reside with other seventy black settlers, cooperation with Chamberlain was vital. When Lynch requested land located below the bridge near Porters Lake, a tract which authorized by Sergeant General Charles Morris, Chamberlain claimed such a grant would interfere with established plans and offered twenty acres above the bridge instead. Lynch continued to hold out for the desired land and his tenacity seems to have paid off; as Chamberlain defended himself from accusations of being a monopolize, Lynch was granted a new homestead located on the South Lot of Lake Porter in 1818.⁶⁸

Early black separatists were familiar with problems such as those experienced by Henry Brown when trying to obtain land. While white sponsorship was often an asset for blacks attempting realize their aspirations of land ownership, it could not counter the weight of the government’s systemic indifference toward its new subjects. In New Brunswick Henry Borum and Benjamin Johnston sought the help of influential and sympathetic whites, James Crawford, Samuel Raymond, and Edward Scovil when petitioning for land. In a letter written on behalf of Borum and Johnson, the three men commented on the sobriety, industry, and honesty of both. Sometime around 1815 Borum and Johnson began their tenancy on Scovil’s farm and made

⁶⁷ T. Chamberlain to Charles Morris, Preston, 11 November 1815, RG 419, Reel 15460, number 41, CP, NSARM; T. Chamberlain to Charles Morris, Preston, 16 November, 1817, cited in Fergusson, *Establishment of Negroes in Nova Scotia*, 82-84; “Untitled document, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number 76, CP, NSARM.

⁶⁸ “Names of the People of Colour Occupying the Lots in Said Division,” cited in Fergusson, *Establishment of Negroes in Nova Scotia*, 92; T. Chamberlain to C. Morris, RG 419-420, Reel 15462, number 85, CPR, NSARM; “Reflecting Objections Made to Mr. Chamberlain Changes for Surveying of Lands, for People of Colour at Preston,” RG 419, Reel 15460, CPR, NSARM.

considerable improvements in the four years they resided there. In 1818 the two decided to request tracts of land located behind lots owned by James Crawford. Having already improved upon thirty acres, they were quite hopeful their request would be granted and even more encouraged when Governor Parr of Nova Scotia remarked on their prudence, sobriety, and industry. For early black separatists freedom in and of itself was not the ultimate goal, neither was life as a domestic worker or laborer. Only land ownership and the perceived independence and social mobility that presumably ensued would suffice. By 1820, Borum and Johnson still had not been granted land by the government and were growing increasingly frustrated by the lethargic pace of official response. The two politely reminded Governor Hailles of why they first immigrated to New Brunswick,

That they were brought from the US by the British Army during the late war, and placed in this Province, that they were encouraged and induced to leave the US by receiving from the British Commander an – assurance that they enjoy their freedom and the privileges of – British subjects, and receive from Government an allotment of land.⁶⁹

Apparently, their efforts to hold the British government to their promise and to become land owners were stifled as others white settlers who were also interested in the tract of land. Another petition had been filed for the same tracts by John Davis, a white resident who was also interested in improving the area. Once Johnson and Borum discovered that Davis had been assigned the tracts of land which they had already begun clearing, they again sought the aid of their reputable white acquaintance and employer, Elias Scovil. Undoubtedly Scovil remarks about the pairs' "disappointment of not obtaining land, has been a very serious one" was not an exaggeration. Scovil pleaded with the Governor Hailes and Council of New Brunswick on their

⁶⁹ Memorial of Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum, 5 March 1820, Kingston, "Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783-1854," ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Jonson_Benjamin_1820_01. 01. RS 108: Index to Land Petitions. Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

behalf, lauding the pairs' "Christian character and their worthiness for the patronage of government." He also insisted that the other person attempting to obtain the tracts had "no intention of occupying it at present and that the land will be in an uncultivated state for many years."⁷⁰ Government mistreatment such as the one experienced by Johnson and Borum were all too common for blacks living in the maritime provinces. White sponsors were utilized as a means to advance the reputation of blacks among whites and with it possibly increase their chances of achieving equality and independence.

Blacks sought cooperation with whites in their attempts at separatism primarily because of security and because white sponsors were willing to take on the role, viewing it as a paternalistic responsibility of sorts. Clarkson wrote of the blacks in Nova Scotia, "if they should make up their minds to attend me for a certainty, that they must from that moment look up to me as their guardian and Protector, and in return I shall expect their obedience and good behavior."⁷¹ This relationship was critical to black separatists working under increased repression in the South and would come to characterize all of their separatist undertakings for the next century.

Like blacks during the antebellum and post Civil War periods, blacks in the South during the Revolutionary Era experienced protest control at the hands of whites when trying to exercise separatist agendas.⁷² Some whites in Nova Scotia tried to suppress early black separatists and

⁷⁰ Note on behalf of Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum, 6 December 1818. Springfield. "Black Loyalists of New Brunswick, 1783- 1851," ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no_Johnson_Benjamin_1818_01. RS 108: Index to Land Petitions. Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick; Petition of Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum, 24 July 1819, Kingston, "Black Loyalist in New Brunswick, 1783-1854," ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. JohnsonBenjamin1819_03. RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Seires, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick; Letter from Elias Scovil on behalf of Benjamin Johnson, 8 November 1819, Springfield, "Black Loyalist in New Brunswick, 1783-1854," AVCA, diplomatic rendition, document no., Johnson_Benjamin_1819_02. RS 108: Index to Land Petitions. Original Series, 1783 – 1918, Provincial PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

⁷¹ Clarkson, 43

⁷² Social movement theorists have begun to replace the use of repression with protest control in order to bring attention to the long term impacts of both private and state sponsored tactics and the use of violent and non-violent forces to curb participation. Jennifer Earl, "Introduction: Repression and the Social Control of Protest," *Mobilization* 11 no. 2 (June 2006): 129-130.

prevent them from immigrating to Sierra Leone. Clarkson became convinced by others that he would, “meet with great opposition from the principal gentlemen in Halifax and that they would have it in their power to prevent the greatest part of the Black people from accepting the offers of the company from their influence with them.”⁷³ Although not an integral part of the market economy in Nova Scotia, black domestic labor and that of menial workers must have been highly valued. Historian Alexander Byrd acknowledges the interests of white employers and the damaged reputation Nova Scotia would suffer internationally if black grievances were authenticated and an exodus actually occurred.⁷⁴ Whether economically or socially important, whites must have valued the continued presence of blacks in Nova Scotia in order for the colonization effort to have generated the amount of targeted opposition that it did.

Black laborers worked on the farms and in the residences of wealthier white Nova Scotians and for far less than would have been demanded by white workers. One black resident told how “white people of this neighborhood were averse to any plan that tended to deprive them of the assistance of the Blacks in the cultivation of their lands, well knowing that people of their own color would never engage with them without being paid an equitable price for their labour.”⁷⁵ Black workers were mostly kept in poverty and white employers were reluctant to relinquish such a profitable labor force.

The circumstances surrounding the exodus of blacks from Nova Scotia became volatile with a potential participant warning Clarkson and his associates “if it were known in town that he had conversed with us in private his life would not be safe.”⁷⁶ Assessing social and political conditions in Nova Scotia, Clarkson chose not to pursue his recruitment efforts openly and

⁷³ Clarkson, 42

⁷⁴ Byrd, 186.

⁷⁵ Clarkson, 51

⁷⁶ Clarkson, 51

instead to be more discreet explaining “I should not solicit one individual to accompany me and that I was likewise as determined to withhold the certificate which was intended as a reward to virtue and industry.”⁷⁷ This less obtrusive and more selective strategy of recruitment was adopted in order to ease the anxiety of white Nova Scotians.

Early black separatists were cognizant of how whites may perceive their attempts at land ownership and freedom and most readily used oppression frames when attempting to attract movement sympathizers and participants.⁷⁸ Oppression frames emphasize the deplorable conditions in which black loyalists and refugees lived and emphasized the need for improved livelihoods. Benjamin Johnston and Henry Burom explained why they were desirous of obtaining land grants in the Parish of Springfield and outside of Locklomond where they currently resided along with small groups of other black families. Writing to Governor Hailes and the Council, they described how the land was, “very heavily timbered, and difficult to improvement, we were sensible it was not in our power to go on it and make a living.” He continued to use the oppression frame in order to invoke sympathy recounting how, “Those who have settled at Lochlamond are at this moment in a miserable condition not having raised provisions sufficient for their families are obliged to seek them in distant settlements.”⁷⁹

Blacks more commonly used oppression frames when writing white officials. Oppression frames invoked sympathy for the less fortunate and were less accusatory toward the government than arguments implying purposeful wrongdoing. Religious and cultural arguments were the least likely to be raised during the early stages of separatist development. Rather these

⁷⁷ Clarkson, 42

⁷⁸ A frame is a conceptual interpretation that organizes experience and guides both collective and individual action. David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, Robert D. Benford, “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” *American Sociological Review* 51 no. 4 (August 1986): 464.

⁷⁹ Memorial of Benjamin Johnson and Henry Borum, 8 March 1820, Kingston. “Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783-1854,” ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Johnson_Benjamin_1820_01. RS 108: Index to Land Petitions. Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

frames were most readily championed by upper class free blacks who were not primarily concerned with lower class goals of land ownership.

For southern blacks land ownership was the ultimate symbol of social and economic achievement. For freedmen it represented the anti-thesis to their enslavement and could effectively preserve their freedom, making them and their progenies perpetually independent.⁸⁰ Family was a key component of this vision and further distinguishes its early black separatists from runaway slaves. Running away in groups or as a family incurred greater detection by authorities, however, these impediments could be eased during times of war.⁸¹ Only 17 years old perhaps Merry was thinking about the future of her unborn child when she ran away from her owner Jacob Willeman in 1779 in South Carolina. She may have known that any child born behind British lines was automatically free and could be one reason why her owner presumed she was being harbored on board a British vessel.⁸²

Despite the increased risk during the revolutionary period blacks frequently ran away together as well as emigrated with the British in marital pairs or familial groups.⁸³ In 1781 South Carolina, Dr. Turnbull reported that an entire family of slaves including a father, mother, and their four children, had fled his plantation in a canoe after the fall of Charleston. Reports of slaves flocking to the British lines occurred throughout the two and a half year period that they occupied the city. While in the 1760s family units, only constituted 4% of runaways, during the 1780s that number rose to 12%. The following year in 1782 attempts were still being made to

⁸⁰ Fyfe, 1, 3; Egerton, 218.

⁸¹ In the decades surrounding the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, the number of slaves running away in groups remained above thirty percent, while numbers declined to as low as twenty-four percent after these conflicts ceased. Philip D. Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry, 1760-1810" in *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Revolution* Pgs:83-142, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1983,) 138.

⁸² 10 March 1779, *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Charleston, South Carolina, BLD, NSM.

⁸³ Frey, 118

track a slave named Cato, his wife Chloe, and their daughter Jenny who had fled their master's plantation only two months after the surrender of the city by the Americans.⁸⁴

Sensing the strength of familiar bonds during the War of 1812 Admiral Cochrane encouraged family emigration among black escapees in the Chesapeake region. In December 1813 this family friendly strategy was expanded to include that naval officers offer a friendly reception to black refugee families, a policy that was meant to build confidence among the black population towards the British in general.⁸⁵ The efforts of black emigrants to flee to the British and to participate in evacuations to British colonies as families should not go unnoticed. For southern blacks working with white colonization organizations prior to the Civil War, the simple act of traveling with one's family was not always guaranteed.

Exercising what little agency they had, many black loyalists and refugees refused to travel without their loved ones even those who were sickly or ill. In 1816 list of new emigrants taken in at Melville Island, John Morris was listed as rather asthmatic, but could be assisted in farming by his wife, Emmy and when older by his two healthy children, Bertha and John. Unmarried John Rogers whose his right hand had been amputated for nearly a year, traveled with his young son, William, whose help, though only five years old, was doubtlessly of great worth to his father.

At times the permanently disabled were even allowed to accompany family members on board British vessels leaving the United States. Sally Williams was in good health and trained as a skilled nurse, who could have possibly worked at the hospital at Melville Island. She travelled with her blind sister, Sable, who at 20 years of age, was a fit resident for the poor house. Nancy Farmer travelled with her infant child and husband, Thomas, who was bedridden having almost

⁸⁴ 15 August 1781, *Royal Gazette*, Charlestown, South Carolina, BLD, NSM; 20 February 1782, *Royal Gazette*, Charlestown, South Carolina, BLD, NSM; Morgan, "Black Society in the Low Country, 1766-1810," 127.

⁸⁵ Weiss, 5-6.

completely lost the use of his legs due to a spinal disease. In some circumstances, participants travelling by themselves presented an even more pathetic situation. Hetty Colestrom was rather weakly at age 60; he travelled to New Brunswick by himself and had no relatives to help care for him. Still worse was Timothy Williams, who at 84 years old was weak and infirm and also had no family to support him. Chances for fifty year old Margaret Sewel on the other hand may be better, as she did have relatives who were already residing in the Nova Scotia.⁸⁶

In 1791 slavery, which was still legal in Nova Scotia complicated the separatist aims of many early black separatists desiring to emigrate with their families to Sierra Leone. John Cottress was an enslaved man with a free wife and family, who all wanted to emigrate to Sierra Leone. Cottress resigned that his family should go, although he, being a slave, must stay. He lamented that “regardless of himself of the cruelties he might hereafter experience for though sunk to the most abject state of wretchedness he could at all times cheer himself with the pleasing reflection that his wife and children were happy.” Clarkson was moved by such an act and attempted unsuccessfully to purchase Cottress’ freedom.⁸⁷

During the Revolutionary period cases such as those of the Cottress family were not uncommon. Clarkson writes specifically of family members being separated on at least three occasions. Twice, the parents of black children who were slaves or indentured servants were forced to choose between either staying in Nova Scotia with loved ones or emigrating to Sierra Leone. Clarkson attempted to persuade several owners and employers to allow the enslaved, indentured, and quasi-free children of black residents to leave with their parents. Ceasar Smith sought Clarkson’s help to persuade his daughter’s employer to relinquish the remaining three years of her indentureship. Reluctantly the parents had indentured the child for five years, after

⁸⁶ “Names, Ages, Descriptions, and Present State of the Blacks,” Melville Island, 6 May 1816, RG 421, Reel 15464, CPr, NSARM.

⁸⁷ Clarkson, 56-57.

having lost all their possessions in a fire. Clarkson, after speaking to the employer Mrs. Hughes, even to the point of having “solicited her in the most affecting way to induce her to give up the child – I called upon her as a Mother,” lamented that his efforts had been to no avail.⁸⁸

Separatists were only able to exercise a small degree of influence during British evacuations and the colonization movement to Sierra Leone. Maintaining family bonds, residences in close proximity to one another, and even dates of departures were often beyond the control of blacks living during slavery. However, for early black separatists family was more often than not a non-negotiable and critical component of the dream of achieving freedom and solidarity.

The influence of familial bonds is critical when considering participation of blacks in British evacuation and colonization plans. Husbands traveled with wives, parents with children, and so on; and while many black loyalists and refugees escaped slavery and fled to the British alone, the movement was principally undertaken by family groups. Of the nearly three thousand blacks who emigrated to Nova Scotia during the Revolutionary War, 1336 were men, 914 were women, and 740 were children. During the War of 1812 familial networks were also extremely important. Of the black refugees arriving in New Brunswick from the Chesapeake region, nearly forty-three percent arrived with family members. Of those who emigrated to Halifax, nearly half were women and children.⁸⁹ The involvement of a family member, not age or gender, was one of the strongest indicators participation during British evacuation and colonization movements.

Churches were also avenues for black participation during the Revolutionary period. As in the North, religious evangelism in the South was a motivating factor for some, but unlike in

⁸⁸ Clarkson, 103-104; Clarkson, 99; Clarkson remarks that the some Masters allow their slaves to live independently, when their families become too large and become burdensome. While under some circumstances slaves living independently may be able to purchase their freedom or live in quasi free states, these conditions would not have been applicable to children remaining in the owner’s household.

⁸⁹ Frey, 193, 199; Whitfield, 37.

the North it was expressly portrayed as being of secondary importance to most. For early southern black separatists, the acquisition of land stood at the center of their vision for the future. Here, providence did not mandate an exodus to a predestined location or a spiritual duty once settled abroad. Rather churches primarily served as meeting places where separatism could be openly discussed and at times promoted.

In October of 1791 John Clarkson spoke to over three hundred blacks assembled at a local church in Birchtown. There the body openly pondered the three options given by the King of England regarding their situation: 1) to immediately receive land allotments in Nova Scotia, 2) to immigrate to Sierra Leone and receive land allotments there, or 3) to join the British military force in the West Indies.⁹⁰ Separatism was discussed rationally and not theologically, and while support or opposition for the movement could be given from the pulpit, these sermons were not prophetic or even evangelistic in nature.

Southern separatism is unique in that religious organizations overwhelmingly served as a mobilizing resource. Whites more often than not neglected religious instruction of slaves and free blacks during the Revolutionary period, some for reasons of fear and others for reasons of preference. The consequence of both was that churches helped foster elements of racial identity and nationalism for blacks.⁹¹ On the frontier some blacks were members of interracial congregations. They were attracted to Baptist and Methodist denominations in particular because of the religious willingness to identify with the poor, preach peace, license black ministers, teach anti-slavery views, appoint black officials, allow black participation in church

⁹⁰ Clarkson, 54.

⁹¹ Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina, 1670 through the Stono Rebellion*, (New York: Knopf, 1974), 114-115; Fyfe, 3; Walker, 71.

life, establish interracial congregations, and overlook educational qualifications for the ministry.⁹²

During this period black Protestantism also expanded to develop more independent churches. Within the church potential participants felt safe to discuss issues of race in private, where whites were not present. It is remarkable that free and enslaved blacks in the South were able to overcome racial barriers and organize all black congregations.⁹³ However, even more extraordinary is that under these conditions some congregations in favor of separatism and working under capable leadership were able to emigrate together. Henry Beverhout led one such congregation from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone in 1792. Beverhout was originally born in St. Croix, but had been living in South Carolina at the time of the British invasion in the early 1780s. By the time he was considering emigration, Beverhout had organized a Methodist congregation in New Scotia. Although Beverhout's congregation was grateful to John Clarkson and the Sierra Leone Company for the offer of emigration, they readily expressed their grievances to him. While waiting onboard ship to depart from Halifax the group, now calling themselves Beverhout Company, declared

We are all willing to be govern by the laws of England in full but we donot consent to gave it to your honor hands with out haven aney of our own Culler in it - ... your will be pleased to rember what your honer whoever came to saraleon would be free and should have a law and when theur war aney trial thear should equel so we consiaderen all this think that we have a wright to chuse men that we think proper for to act for us in a reasenble manner.⁹⁴

Beverhout's congregation, which was formed a few years earlier in Nova Scotia, acted with solidarity when voicing their concerns about emigrating.

⁹² Egerton, 181; Albert J. Raboteau, "The Slave Church in the Era of the American Revolution," Pgs: 193-213 in *Slavery and Freedom in the Era of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1983,) 203-204.

⁹³ Byrd, 161; In Lexington, Kentucky, Uncle Peter or Old Captain started the First African Baptist Church at the turn of the 18th century, Morgan, 669; A black congregation was organized on the Byrd Plantation in Hanover County, Virginia in the 1750s with parts later becoming the Cub Creek congregation in Charlotte County, Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2007), 15.

⁹⁴ Beverhout Company, Halifax, Nova Scotia. 26 June 1792 in Fyfe, 25

Often congregations would elect their pastor to inquire on their behalf regarding the particulars of departure, residence, and provisions as well as organize potential recruits. On his way to Shelbourne, Nova Scotia, Clarkson was met by a black minister on his way to Halifax, who had been sent by local blacks to question him about the Sierra Leone colony.⁹⁵ The minister who sought further explanation of the venture meant to share this information with his fellow interested parishioners.

Other ministers such as Moses Wilkinson emigrated with his Methodist congregation from Birchtown, and Boston King with his entire Wesleyan congregation at Dartmouth. Other minister such as Cato Perkins also left Nova Scotia with portions of their congregations. David George was another separatist leader who was able to lead an early separatist congregation. First, he successfully led members of the Silver Bluff congregation to Savannah during the British occupation of that city in the 1781. Later he would lead members of his church from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone.⁹⁶

While performing duties such as making inquiries and collecting information, early separatist leaders often placed themselves in danger. During the Revolutionary Era when blacks were increasingly excluded from professional occupations, the ministry became an avenue for black leadership to emerge.⁹⁷ Black separatist David George, a leader in the colonization movement to Sierra Leone, was originally born in Virginia around 1740. While a slave, George was sold numerous times, and by the outbreak of the Revolutionary War was living as a slave, the property of George Galphin, in Silver Bluff, South Carolina. After his Master fled George eventually escaped to the British and eventually sailed to Nova Scotia. After voicing his support for emigration to Sierra Leone, George became a target for repression. He feared “the principle

⁹⁵ Clarkson, 60.

⁹⁶ Fyfe, 4-5; Byrd, 62-163; Clifford, 56, 93.

⁹⁷ Egerton, 183.

white people of this town who had thrown out several menaces against him, with a view to prevent his taking an active part in this business.”⁹⁸ In spite of such opposition, it seems that the majority of black separatist leaders did not waiver from their organizing efforts.

Black communities also served as major networks of recruitment. In Nova Scotia the black loyalists formed communities at several places such as Preston, Birchtown, Port Roseway (now Shelburne), Port Mouton, Annapolis Royal, Fort Cumberland, Halifax, Cornwallis, Horton, Weymouth, Digby, Windsor, Sydney, Parrsboro, and Tracadie. In New Brunswick loyalist settled in near St. John. After the War of 1812 black refugees settled in Halifax, Preston, Hammonds Plains, Beechville, Porter’s Lake, the Windsor area, and near Lucasville Road.⁹⁹

At times even slaves who were forced to emigrate by their loyalist owners held aspirations of living independently as free black settlers. Anthony Rivers emigrated to New Brunswick in 1783 as a slave of Captain Gerhardus Clowes. He was an agricultural worker by trade and was freed by executors of Clowes’ estate in 1806. Although residing in York County for ten years, Rivers did not petition for land until 1821, after the formation of a settlement where Adam Wise, another black man, was thought to have successfully petitioned for land.¹⁰⁰

Undoubtedly Rivers was encouraged to act upon his own desires by Wise’s seemingly successful attempt at land ownership. The blacks who settled small communities such as the one in York County expressed mostly working class ideals with their goals of land acquisition. This desire would become a motivating factor for the separatist movement to Sierra Leone as well as later movements by blacks attempting to leave the South throughout the nineteenth century.

⁹⁸ Clarkson, 60; Pybus, 38-40.

⁹⁹ Carmelita Robertson, *Black Loyalists of Nova Scotia: Tracing the History of the Tracadie Loyalists, 1776 – 1787* (Halifax: History Section, Nova Scotia Museum, 2000), 20-21; Ruth Holmes Whitehead, Carmelita Robertson, et al., *The Black Loyalists of Nova Scotia: Part 1*, (Halifax: The Nova Scotia Museum) 1; The Brownspriggs Historical Committee, *The History of the Little Tracadie Black Loyalists* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 2001), 9-10.

¹⁰⁰ Petition of Anthony Rivers, 24 January 1821, Fredricton, “Black Loyalists in New Brunswick, 1783-1854,” ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no. Rivers_Anthony_1821_01.RS1_8: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783-1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick.

Although southern blacks like Wise were not able to independently implement a separatist movement, the revolutionary period created the political opportunities necessary for southern blacks to collectively act upon their desires.¹⁰¹

During the colonization movement to Sierra Leone no settlers from the Tracadie area participated. This fact may be due to the lack of a recruiter to visit the area in person or perhaps to the rapid growth of Tracadie in the 1780s and 1790s. In 1787 the government granted seventy-four black families over two thousand acres of land at Tracadie. Besides being home to numerous black land owners, Tracadie was also home to a ran by Thomas Brownspriggs. Brownspriggs probably came to Nova Scotia by way of St. Augustine, Florida in the early 1780s aboard the *Argo* and is listed as the intelligent servant of Captain Brownspriggs. In 1788 Brownspriggs received authorization from Anglican Bishop Charles Ingliss of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to become schoolmaster. The Bishop was also kind enough to send Brownspriggs over one-hundred prayer books and tracts with which to instruct the pupils. Although an Anglican Church would not exist in Tracadie until 1820, Brownspriggs led Sunday School for the residents, probably in his home. Sadly, much of the land granted to black settlers at Tracadie would be taken by white settlers in the coming years because of governmental mismanagement and redistribution.¹⁰²

Despite the general “poorness of the soil” in many of the locations ascribed by the government for settlement, blacks further expressed their solidarity through small scale land ownership and the creation of communal institutions.¹⁰³ Richard Crankapone was a wheeler by trade, but undoubtedly possessed skills beyond his training. In 1785 he was appointed Captain of a company of thirty-four black men residing in a small community at Carleton in New

¹⁰¹ Byrd, 157.

¹⁰² *Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia, Part 2*, 5, 9, 18, 20, 31, 33, 35; Clifford, 91.

¹⁰³ Clarkson, 40.

Brunswick and wrote Governor Thomas Carleton on their behalf. Crankapone made reference to the loyalty of his fellow petitioners during the American Revolution and stated their willingness to remain so now that they resided in the province. He related the troubles of the small community of loyalists explaining how “they find by Experience that they, their wives and children cannot subsist at Carelton and are under Apprehension of suffering this winter, Labour and Provision being so very scarce.” Crankapone used a theme of common oppression to invoke justification for the groups’ ultimate goal of land ownership. He continued “the Blacks, should lead industrius, honest Lives and instead of being a Burthen, should be an Advantage to the community That should it please Your Excellency to grant the backland described in the annexed Plan to the Company.”¹⁰⁴

During the 1790s large numbers of immigrants to Sierra Leone were from the same communities in Nova Scotia and chose to travel collectively, and once settled, to reorganize in the pattern of their previous communities. Many of these exoduses represent not the emigration of individuals or families, but entire communities.¹⁰⁵ Many Birchtown residents were in agreement about leaving Nova Scotia believing that, “their labour was lost upon the land in this country and their utmost efforts would barely keep them in existence, that being now sunk to the lowest pitch of wretchedness, their condition could not be otherwise than meliorated.”¹⁰⁶ In the petition residents requested to settle, “as near as Possible To the Inhabitants of Preston, as they and us Are intimately acquaint’d.” T. Chamberlain, the proprietor of Preston, also complained about the majority of residents leaving in 1793 under the auspices of the Sierra Leone

¹⁰⁴ Petition of Richard Wheeler and Company, 6 January 1785, Fredericton, “Blacks in New Brunswick, 1783-1854,” ACVA, diplomatic rendition, document no Wheeler_Richard_1785_07.RS108: Index to Land Petitions: Original Series, 1783 – 1918, PANB, Fredricton, New Brunswick; Wilson, 116; The colony of New Brunswick was formed from Nova Scotia in 1784 due in part to the large influx of new loyalist emigrants to the area.

¹⁰⁵ Byrd, 194.

¹⁰⁶ Clarkson, 56.

Company.¹⁰⁷ The tendency of communities to relocate is one characteristic of early black separatists and would remain so throughout the nineteenth century.

Early black separatists of the revolutionary period were from the lower classes and had agricultural backgrounds. They strategically allied themselves with competing groups during the conflicts in order to seize freedom and obtain land. Although unable to execute separatist plans independently during the Revolutionary Era, the characteristics and structures of later separatist movements with markedly more autonomy are readily observable among these early pioneers. Like these early participants, black separatists from the South after 1820 would also be driven by incentives of personal liberty coupled with economic security. This combination would become the leading rationale for all separatist movement participants in the South until the twentieth century. Yet the experiences of these early separatists account for only a part of the saga of southern black separatism, a movement which despite overt state and private repression, would continue to grow during the antebellum era.

¹⁰⁷ Birchtown People's Petition, 1791, in Fyfe, 23.

CHAPTER II

THE ANTEBELLUM ERA

“But what! Although my father’s halls,
Unrecognised, I tread, -
Although my foot, unconscious, falls
Above my kindred dead;
Do not the bright and glorious sun,
The wide extended plain,
The river, which since time has run,
Unchanging still remain?
And they, though sounds no human voice,
Speak me a welcome true,
That bids my inmost heart rejoice,
As each arrests my view.
For, what though friends and kindred all
No more around me stand, -
Am I not near my father’s hall,
Free in my native land?”¹

The *African Repository and Colonial Journal* published this poem entitled, “Abdul Rahhaman, The Moorish Prince,” in 1829 with the intention of gathering sympathy and financial support to free the enslaved prince, Abduhl Rahhahman also known as Ab-dul Rahman Ibrahim Ibn Sori. He was sixty-five years old when he finally emigrated from Mississippi to Liberia, the American Colonization Society’s sponsored colony for American blacks, after being held in slavery for nearly forty years. The American Colonization Society (ACS) was a white organization sponsoring black emigration to Africa and published the *African Repository* to promote their cause. Although ACS policy did not officially use of organizational funds for the

¹ “Abduhl Rahhaman, The Moorish Prince,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 5 no. 3 (May 1829): 94; “Abduhl Rahhahman,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 5 no. 5 (July 1829): 158; “The unfortunate Moor,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 3. No. 12 (Feb 1828): 364; “Departure of the Carolinian,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 6 no. 9 (November 1830): 282; “Latest from Liberia,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 5 no. 9 (November 1829): 279; Abduhl Rahhahman, The Unfortunate Moorish Prince,” *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* vol. 4 no. 3 (May 1828): 77-81; For more information on Ab-dul Rahman Ibrahim Ibn Sori see Terry Alford, *Prince Among Slaves* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

purchase of slaves, it did on occasion collect donations for exceptional cases such as that of Abdul Rahman Ibrahima Ibn Sori. He was a Fulbe prince, who was sold as a slave after being captured in battle. He also was a practicing Muslim, who would not convert to Christianity despite the ACS's explicit goal of evangelization. Although his situation is inconsistent with the ACS policy of promoting free and freed black colonization and evangelization, the organization used the remarkable story as an opportunity to publicize colonization.² The poem's author describes Rahman's situation in terms implying a personal longing to return to his homeland and live free. Homeland implies that he and blacks naturally belonged in Africa, the only place where they could truly be free. The poem's author specifically chose these references in an attempt to gain support from numerous factions in the slavery debate. The two references were chosen in order to garnish support from abolitionists' wanting to encourage manumission and deportation among slave owners as well as supporters of slavery who saw free blacks as an unwanted population in America.

While Rahman's situation was unique, it was also representative of the experiences of slaves and some free black separatist during the antebellum era. He desired to leave the United States and return to Africa, not to convert native Africans or to culturally uplift them, but instead to pursue his own personal interests and eagerly worked with the ACS and other white supporters of colonization in order to achieve this aim. Without the financial support of white patrons and the American Colonization Society who sympathized with his plight, Rahman would not have successfully emigrated with his wife and two children. Despite this success, Rahman

² The ACS did not officially sanction the purchasing of slaves, because it could alienate anti-slavery factions, by engaging in the dehumanizing practice of buying another person, and pro-slavery factions, by decreasing the number of slaves in the United States. On occasion the ACS took public donations to purchase slaves, Eric Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: a History of the American Colonization Society* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 77; The Pennsylvania Colonization Society, a more radical auxiliary organization of the ACS, openly condoned purchasing slaves, Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: a History of the American Colonization Society*, 83, 91.

was forced to leave several of his children enslaved in Mississippi and was pressured to leave the United States almost immediately once manumitted. Rahman's frustrations are similar to those felt by the thousands of black in the South who participated in the separatist movement under the restrictive conditions of the antebellum period.

Because of the lack of political opportunities for black social movement development in the South during the antebellum period, historians of Black Nationalism have tended to focus their investigations on communities in the North. The contributions of the enslaved population of the United States are thought of as only tangentially related to the black protest discourse. Historians Patrick Rael and Ousmane Greene use the writings of elite black Northerners to argue that blacks generally viewed the ACS as racist and generally disregard the contribution of slaves to social protest movements.³ These studies do not address the point of view of slaves in the South, but detail northern blacks who maintained newspapers and who had a wide public audience. Researchers James and Lois Horton reference northern black interested in colonization during the early antebellum period some, but claim that by 1820 interest in African emigration had somewhat died out along with the last generation of native born Africans brought to the U.S.⁴ This type of analysis places undeserved importance on heritage as a motivating factor in separatist endeavors. Many poor free blacks and slaves from the South were not primarily motivated by cultural considerations, but rather by the practical desire to improve their livelihoods most readily by land acquisition. These facts should cause historians to reexamine the South's place in the history of radical black thought.

³ Patrick Rael, *Black Identity & Black Protest in the Antebellum North*, 2-4, 44, 213; Ousmane Kirumu Greene, "Against Wind and Tide: African Americans' Response to the Colonization Movement and Emigration, 1770-1865," (Ph.D., Dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 200), 1-15.

⁴ Horton and Horton, 178-79, 191.

If for no other reason than demography, the South and its black inhabitants should not be relegated to the fringes of Black Nationalism. The majority of blacks throughout the nineteenth century lived in the South. In 1800, half of all blacks living in the United States, or about 500,000, lived in the Chesapeake region, most notably Virginia, while another 350, 000 lived in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The cities of, Newbern, North Carolina and Charleston, South Carolina, Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia, and Savannah, Georgia all had black majorities. Nine-tenths of the black population in the United States lived in these regions. Ex-slaves and persons from the South also made up the bulk of separatists emigrating through the auspices of the ACS. Of the more than 11, 000 blacks who emigrated to Liberia between 1822 and 1862 approximately 55% were manumitted slaves. The majority of free black participants, around 75%, were from southern states. The ACS had its strongest following among blacks in the South specifically in the upper areas of the Chesapeake.⁵ Despite the presence of slavery and racially discriminatory laws, blacks protested. For early black separatists, this protest came through socially acceptable channels such as the ACS. These conditions did not serve to extinguish black protest in the region, but rather facilitated its radical and adaptive nature.

Though southern black separatists during the Revolutionary Era could not form separatist societies, through their cooperation with the British, they gained the right to petition their government in their continued efforts to achieve land and liberty. In the antebellum South, this right was not guaranteed. Slaves, and in some cases free blacks, were not allowed to bring suit, testify, or serve on juries in court. While freedom petitions to state legislatures by blacks to end

⁵ Morgan, 659-660, 663-664; Eric Burin, "Envisioning Africa: American Slaves' Ideas about Africa," *Liberia Studies Journal*, 27 no. 1 (2002): 1-17, 1; Horton, 189; Eric Burin, "If the rest stay, then I will stay; if they go, then I will go: How Slaves Familial Bonds Affected American Colonization Society Manumissions," in *Paths to Freedom: Manumission in the Atlantic World*, edited by Rosemary Brana-Shute and Randy J. Sparks, pgs: 291-308, (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 302-303.

slavery and finance emigration appeared throughout the North, early black separatists in the South could not go to the judicial system to ameliorate their condition.⁶ The absence of such petitions in the South does not negate the fact that separatist sentiment existed among its black population as well.

During this period in the South, black separatism operated in abeyance or in a degree of decreased activity and high state social control.⁷ During this period black separatists had the least amount of options when deciding how to achieve land and liberty. Lacking the opportunities caused by wartime chaos to exercise their agenda and the legal status to access the courts, early black separatists directed their efforts toward working with white colonization organizations in order to achieve their aims. While some northern blacks may have characterized black separatist as contributors to black inequality, the participation of southern blacks in white sponsored colonization movements was undertaken in order to minimize opposition and maximize support for their goals. Though the white colonization movement is a social movement within its own right, it distinctively functioned as an abeyance structure within black separatism and protest.

The ACS could be seen as both repressive, by effectively nullifying black aspirations for freedom and the benefits associated with mobility within the United States, and as a strategy for black empowerment, by providing an avenue for unadulterated black achievement in an all black settlement abroad. Organized by an assortment of whites concerned about race relations in the

⁶ Richard S. Newman, Roy E. Finkenbine, and Douglass Mooney, "Philadelphia Emigrationist Petition circa 1792: An Introduction," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 64, no. 1 (January 2007): 161-166, 65; Manisha Sinha, "To 'cast just obliquely' on Oppressors: Black Radicalism in the Age of Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 64, no. 1 (January 2007): 149-160, 151.

⁷ Movements function in abeyance when faced with an oppositional political environment. Social movement organizations that emerge during periods of abeyance and those persons who choose to participate may actually impede the process of liberal change. Participants, nonetheless, by their mere existence, serve to challenge the social status quo; Verta Taylor, Social Movement Continuity: The Women's Movement in *Abeyance*," *American Sociological Review* 54 no.5 (1989): 762.

United States, the ACS began in 1816 under the direction of Robert Finley with the specific purpose to colonize free blacks beyond the borders of the United States. Comprising both anti and pro slavery persons, the organization identified itself as a moderator between the two factions.⁸ The ACS attracted conservative whites in both camps by not advocating immediate abolition and simultaneously promoting manumission in conjunction with deportation. This strategy to minimize repression and appease both slavery's supporters and detractors, undoubtedly informed members of the General Association of the Manumission Society of North Carolina, which changed its name to the Manumission and Colonization Society of North Carolina in 1816.⁹ Formed by reform minded Quakers, members of the Society felt that their liberal manumission policy would not gain much support within the state, and therefore reasoned colonization to be a more hospitable ideology in a pro slavery political environment.

The turbulent climate affected the ACS' strategy for gaining support. Originally, leaders attempted to gain federal aid for the program, but the division of the country over slavery and the reluctance of the federal government to get involved stifled this approach. In 1832 pro slavery Senator Henry Clay was able to get a national improvement plan in support of colonization pass the United States House of Representatives and the Senate, however another pro slavery politician, President Andrew Jackson, who was also a member of the ACS, used his veto power to kill it. Even if freed blacks had to leave the state, pro-slavery factions still viewed it as harmful to the system of racial subordination.

In such an antagonistic political climate success nationally was unlikely. The ACS found greater support when lobbying at the state level and thus also fractured into state movements,

⁸ Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: a History of the American Colonization Society*, 18-19; Clegg, "Africa and the African American imagination," 5-7; P. J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York: Octagon Books, 1980), 17.

⁹ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty* 26.

each toting their own anti or pro slavery colonization ideology characterized largely by Upper South states' emphasis on gradual emancipation and the Gulf Coast and Cotton Belt states' emphasis with the removal of free blacks.¹⁰ In some areas, open support for colonization was not acceptable. S. Wesley Jones was a separatist leader who corresponded with the ACS for more than ten years. Although Jones, a free black man in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, knew of several white men who supported the movement, he did not speak about it in public. In 1849 Jones wrote to the ACS that, "I have not ventured to make any enquiries among the white citizens in Regard to the matter from the fact that this is a difficult part of the country in such things and it would not do for one like me to talk to them about such Things with a very few Exceptions."¹¹ Although not publicized in newspapers such as in the North, throughout the antebellum era in the South the colonization debate remained active; and local support for the ACS, most often in the form of financial assistance and favorable judicial rulings, varied by state.

While historians such as P. J. Staundenraus and Marie Tyler-McGraw argue the ACS was founded upon anti-slavery principals, others such as George M. Frederickson and Allen Yarema portray the organization as racist.¹² Both accounts are correct as both factions existed within the national organization. While some slavery advocates used racist arguments to justify the necessity of removing free blacks in order to ensure slavery's continuance, other members of the

¹⁰ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 143-144, 149; Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic*, 2; George M. Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: the Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 26-27.

¹¹ S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 2 May 1849, American Colonization Society, Library of Congress.

¹² Allen Yarema, *American Colonization Society: an Avenue to Freedom?* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2006), 11, 19; George M. Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: the Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 1-34; Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865*, 113-114, 309; Tyler-McGraw, 2, See also Henry Noble Sherwood, "The Formation of the American Colonization Society," *Journal of Negro History* 3 no. 2 (July 1917): 209-228, 220, 225; Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 2.

society believed blacks were inherently capable of self-determination and were only stigmatized and outcast in American society because of their slave status.

Seemingly on opposite ends of the spectrum, members of this ideologically diverse organization were connected by their shared belief in racial separatism. American white colonizationists, whether possessing abolitionist or slave-owning sympathies, did not believe that whites and blacks could live together. Even Quakers, who have a long history of support for reformist causes, followed this principle. After potential Liberian emigrants from North Carolina became stranded in Philadelphia, known acquaintances from the city's Quaker community, openly rejected their residence in the city.¹³

The ACS was devoted to racial separation, but was never a completely a pro-slavery or an anti-slavery organization. The fact that some ACS leaders were slave owners generally did not deter southern blacks from seeking assistance from the organization in realizing their goals. The Society's use of racist arguments to increase state support could not stop the slaves or poor free blacks who made up the southern black lower class from pursuing their own agendas within the colonization movement.

Unmoved by the racist jargon printed *African Repository* to solicit the support of some white benefactors, southern black separatist worked with the ACS because it was the most readily available organization open to facilitating their aims. On occasion slaves took it upon themselves to write the ACS and inquire about colonization. Burrell W. Mann was a self-described "slave minister" who lived in Richmond, Virginia and belonged to John Cosby. Mann was determined to go to Liberia and wrote the ACS, because it offered the most readily available

¹³ Although a Quaker community in Philadelphia in the mid 18th century vowed to support anti-slavery reform and encourage manumission, the group did not profess equal treatment for blacks, generally did not educate them, and were rarely allowed them in their meeting houses, Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 16-17, 58-59, 137-138; Egerton, 27.

means to get him there. He sought approval from the ACS by emphasizing his religious character.

Perhaps Mann was solely driven by religious zeal, however a more practical desire for freedom seems more evident. After a group of white Methodist ministers decided not to purchase Mann from his master, Mann planned to ask his master to cover the cost of sending him to Liberia. If that did not work, he wanted the ACS to purchase him directly for the negotiated price of \$150. In turn he promised to work to evangelize Africa. Mann indicates his commitment to separatism when he wrote, “My determination if possible is to go to Liberia. let it cost what it may.” He even goes so far as to condone the practice of slavery by offering himself for legal sale to the ACS in order to live freely in Africa.¹⁴ Mann’s did not emphasize his support of African evangelization and omit any reference to his obvious obtainment of freedom, because he was more concerned with his religious duty than his actual manumission, rather he chose to address leaders of the ACS in such a manner as to garnish the most support from the ideologically ambiguous organization.

Cledwell Whitted did not espouse his religious qualifications when he wrote the ACS in the hopes that the organization would help him and his wife emigrate to Liberia. Whitted was a free black man and described himself as a, “stout hearty man,” who claimed not to have lost six days to sickness in his thirty years of working as a farmer. His wife was also very skilled and a well-known, “first rate dresßmaker.” Whitted referred to Judge Nash as a person who could attest to his character and the Judge’s wife was personally involved in Whitted’s wife’s education and care. Although praising God and his providence, he did not indicate any intention to minister to indigenous Africans, but rather espoused his industriousness, believing that he and his wife

¹⁴ Burrell W. Mann, Richmond, Virginia, 21 June 1847 in “Letters to the American Colonization Society,” *The Journal of Negro History* 10 no. 2 (April 1925): 168.

would, “make ourselves as useful as in our power.”¹⁵ Whitted was doubtlessly referring to their occupational talents. Although Whitted did not express his nationalist ideals in a well articulated essay published in a magazine or journal, he and thousands like him from the southern black lower class was nevertheless able to formulate informed and a unique separatist ideology despite limited resources and opportunities.

After the Civil War southern black separatists had the option of continuing to cooperate with the white colonization movement or joining black emigration organizations, but this choice was not available during the antebellum period. Black separatism and white colonization are directly related to one another and participants worked together, despite their different ideologies. Social movement researcher Bert Klandermans contends that, “social movements come into being because people who are aggrieved and have the resources to organize seize the political opportunities they perceive.”¹⁶ Although blacks were aggrieved and possessed some resources, they did not live in an amiable political environment where they could organize independently; therefore they participated in the white colonization movement to achieve their goals of land and liberty. In Alabama S. Wesley Jones realized this relationship and did not bother himself with the ideological differences between white colonizationists and black separatists. He wrote the ACS regarding the growth of the colonization movement among blacks and whites in Alabama,

It is gratifying to me in the highest degree to see colonization taking such strong hold upon the hearts of the people of this great Republic, and upon that class that is able to give the cause that aid which is so much needed – I mean pecuniary assistance, the rich merchant, the wealthy farmer, the large slaveholder, are all joining their hearts and hands to the cause, raising their voices in its praise and defence, all over the land.¹⁷

¹⁵ Cledwell Whitted to William McClain, Hillsboro, North Carolina, 23 January 1851, ACS, LOC.

¹⁶ Bert Klandermans, “Why Social Movements Come into Being and Why People Join Them,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* Judith Blau, Editor, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 276.

¹⁷ S. Wesley Jones, not signed but most likely him, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” *The Journal of Negro History* 10 no. 2 (April 1925): 222.

Because of the amount of protest control in the South, black separatists had to work within the white colonization movement, but did so strategically, in order to achieve their desired aims. Because of this direct relationship between the two camps, the participation of early black separatists in the colonization movement was affected by the fluctuations in the financial strength of the ACS and its ability to finance its operations.

National events such as the Panic of 1837, the depression of the 1840s, and the Mexican War worked to decrease white and black participation in the colonization movement, while events such as financial support bequeathed by dead benefactors worked to increase support.¹⁸ Strained economic conditions corresponded with declines in the colonization movement and southern black participation. In the wake of the crises of the 1830s ACS expeditions to Liberia decreased for more than a decade. (See Table 1 and Figure 1) For these years black participation fell below earlier levels just prior to the economic recession. Decreases in the resources of the ACS resulted in a falling off of southern black separatist activities.

Table 1. Number of Emigrants to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants
1820	11
1821	26
1822	0
1823	13
1824	102
1825	51
1826	138
1827	80
1828	200

¹⁸ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 161; Staudenraus, 242-3.

Table 1, continued.

1829	132
1830	208
1831	122
1832	362
1833	244
1834	355
1835	9
1836	125
1837	72
1838	204
1839	36
1840	71
1841	104
1842	211
1843	22
1844	132
1845	167
1846	99
1847	36
1848	386
1849	363
1850	342
1851	468
1852	313
1853	183
1854	816
1855	217
1856	507
1857	330
1858	120
1859	165
1860	200
1861	0
1862	14
1863	0
1864	0
1865	150
1866	433
1867	626
1868	786
1869	145
1870	192

Table 1, continued.

1871	242
1872	147
1873	142
1874	26
1875	0
1876	41
1877	7
1878	137
1879	83
1880	142
1881	248
1882	26
1883	38
1884	21
1885	44
1886	109
1887	93
1888	47
1889	16
1890	58
1891	108
1892	1
1893	4
1894	2
1895	1
1896	0
1897	0
1898	1
1899	6
1900	3
1901	1
1902	1
1903	0
1904	4
1905	0

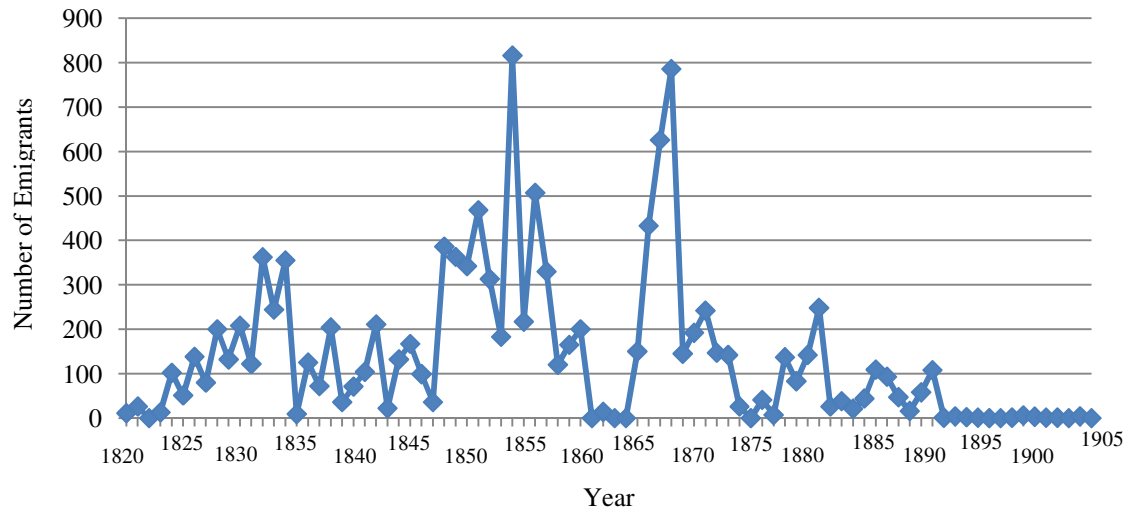


Figure 1. Number of Emigrants to Liberia

White colonization could not function without the expressed cooperation of black separatists. Many southern states mandated deportation with manumission, giving slaves an ultimatum; stay and remain a slave or leave and become free.¹⁹ This ultimatum, however, was still a choice and some slaves opted to stay. For slaves, the choice was not always obvious or simple. Remaining enslaved brought the possibility of being sold, abused, or mistreated and could often bring just as much uncertainty as choosing to become an emigrant in a new land and risking death, disease, or starvation.²⁰ The fact remains that it was slaves and free blacks who ultimately made the decision to stay or leave. Southern black separatists could not, however, form their own emigration societies and thus most often had to operate within the confines of the ACS. Despite the lack of black autonomy, some patterns of black and white participation within the colonization movement did exist.

¹⁹ Henry Noble Sherwood, "Early Negro Deportation Projects," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 2 no. 4 (March 1916): 484-508, 508.

²⁰ Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 57; Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 189-90.

The need to address the question of the future of free blacks in a slave society was the motor that drove white organizations like the ACS. Black and white interest regarding this issue increased during times of exigency. During the antebellum years, the ACS emerged as a solution to the exigency regarding the increasing number of free blacks in American society.²¹ Often both blacks and whites viewed the same events as reasons to mobilize. Both black separatists and white colonizationists perceived national and local events such as the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act or state sponsored free black expulsion laws such as the 1853 Illinois Black Law as exigencies. Twenty-one emigrants, the first and only group of prewar blacks from Texas to leave for Liberia, left in 1852 following the law's passage. During this period in states such as Alabama and North Carolina the amount of colonization participation also increased dramatically. (See Tables 2 and 7 and Figures 2 and 7)

²¹ An exigency is a perceived social problem or strain, which provides principal motive for participation; Delindus R. Brown, "Free Blacks' Rhetorical Impact on African Colonization: The Emergence of Rhetorical Exigence," *Journal of Black Studies* 9 no. 3 (March 1979): 252-254.

Table 2. Colonization Expeditions from Alabama to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1831	1	Valador	
1842	5	Maripose	
1848	23	Nehemiah Rich	
1849	9	Laura	
1851	3	Alida	
1852	16	Julia Ford	Montgomery (Montgomery County)
1852	13	Zebra	Montgomery (Montgomery County)
1852	4	Zebra	Pike County
Table 2, continued.			
1852	3	Zebra	Greene County
1853	1	Adeline	Athens (Limestone County)
1854	1	Gen. Pierce	Glennville (Russell County)
1854	7	Gen. Pierce	Gunter's Landing (Marshall County)
1854	7	Gen. Pierce	Madison County
1855	4	Lamartine	
1856	2	Elvira Owen	Tuscaloosa (Tuscaloosa County)
1856	2	Mary Caroline Stevens	Tuscaloosa (Tuscaloosa County)
1856	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Mobile (Mobile County)
1857	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Gainesville (Sumter County)

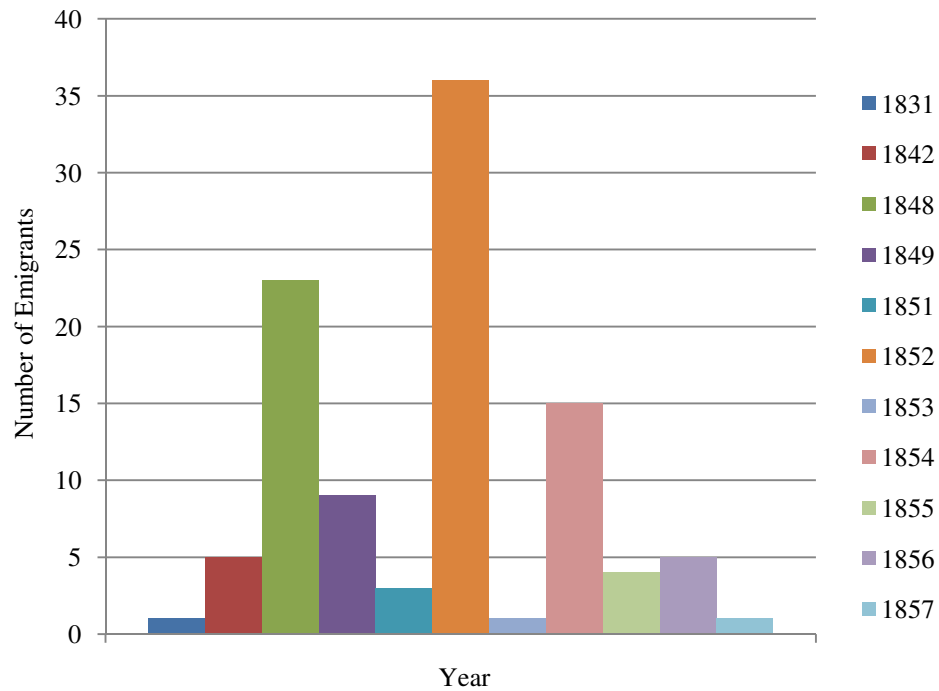


Figure 2. Colonization Expeditions from Alabama to Liberia

Table 7. Colonization Expeditions from North Carolina to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1826	126	Indian Chief	Perquimans County, Pasquatak County, Chowan County
1827	73	Doris	
1828	142	Nautilus	
1830	4	Carolinian	
1831	44	Valador	
1831	21	Criterion	
1832	36	James Perkins	
1832	79	American	

Table 7, continued.

1833	13	Roanoke	
1837	23	Roundout	
1838	72	Marine	
1839	25	Saluda	
1841	5	Saluda	
1844	1	Virginia	
1848	1	Amazon	
1848	5	Liberia Packet	
1850	58	Liberia Packet	Murfreesboro (Hertford County)
1850	4	Liberia Packet	New Bern (Craven County)
1850	2	Liberia Packet	Franklin County
1850	12	Edgar	New Bern (Craven County)
1851	3	Liberia Packet	Murfreesboro (Hertford County)
			Elizabeth City (Pasequotak County, Camden County)
1851	7	Morgan Dix	
1851	6	Morgan Dix	Edgecombe County
1851	10	Liberia Packet	Iredel County
			Elizabeth City (Pasequotak County, Camden County)
1852	16	Ralph Cross	
1852	69	Joseph Maxwell	Fayetteville (Cumberland County)
			Chapel Hill (Durham County and Orange County)
1852	13	Joseph Maxwell	
1852	9	Joseph Maxwell	Wilmington (New Hanover County)
1852	8	Joseph Maxwell	Mecklenburg County
1852	4	Joseph Maxwell	Cabarrus County
1852	2	Joseph Maxwell	New Bern (Craven County)
1853	2	Banshee	Pasquatank County
1853	17	Banshee	Bladen County
1853	26	Banshee	Raliegh (Wake County)
1853	7	Banshee	Guilford County
1854	4	Banshee	Orange County
			Elizabeth City (Pasequotak County, Camden County)
1854	15	Sophia Walker	
1855	1	Lamartine	
1856	28	Elvira Owen	Wilmington (New Hanover County)
1856	12	Elvira Owen	Halifax County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Raliegh (Wake County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	12	Stevens	Hertford (Perquimans County)

Table 7, continued.

1856	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Bladen County
1857	18	Mary Caroline Stevens	New Bern (Craven County)
1857	106	Mary Caroline Stevens	Bladen County
1857	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Wilmington (New Hanover County)
1858	?55	Mary Caroline Stevens	Adams County
1858	?8	Mary Caroline Stevens	Benton County
1858	?8	Mary Caroline Stevens	
1860	?17	Mary Caroline Stevens	Newburg

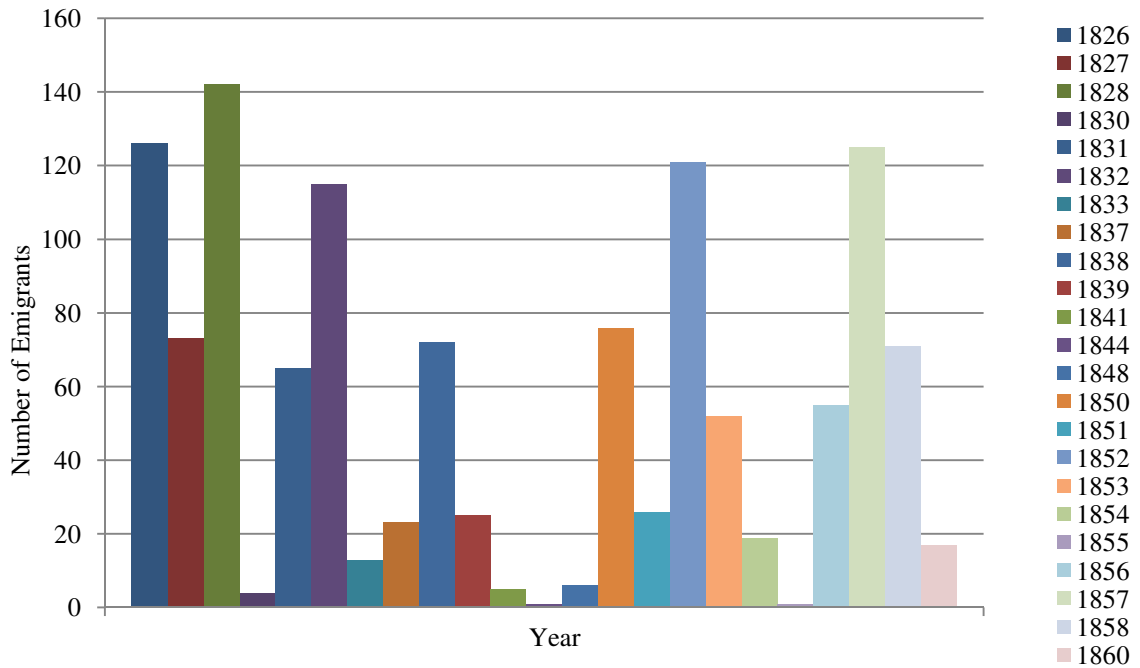


Figure 7. Colonization Expeditions from North Carolina to Liberia

Isaac Mayson was an early separatist leader in Augusta, Georgia who reported his progress in the area to the ACS. Mayson communicated with several emigration parties in and around Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. The largest number of prewar emigrants left Georgia for Liberia during this time. (See Table 3 and Figure 3) In February 1851 he reported that he and his friends were preparing to leave that April and that the total number of emigrants should approach 150 persons. About the same time, a local shoe merchant willed that his forty slaves be sent to Liberia, and if any refused, that they be sold into slavery. Mayson commented how it was “foolish,” for blacks to stay in the United States under the condition of slavery and not, “emigrate to the American

Colored man's land of promise.”²² Liberia offered opportunities for mobility that whites denied to slaves and free blacks in the United States. For Mayson, the choice whether to stay or emigrate was clear. He chose the latter in order to immediately improve his station in life.

Table 3. Colonization Expeditions from Georgia to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1828	27	Randolph	
1830	30	Montgomery	
1830	9	Carolinian	Savannah (Chatham County)
1831	18	Criterion	
			Augusta (Richmond County), Savannah (Chatham County)
1833	26	Hercules	
1834	61	Indiana	
1836	14	Luna	
1848	6	Amazon	
1848	54	Col Howard	
1849	114	Huma	
1850	154	Chieftan	Darien (McIntosh County)
1851	45	Baltimore	Burke County
1851	26	Baltimore	Augusta (Richmond County)
1851	27	Baltimore	Savannah (Chatham County)
1851	44	Liberia Packet	Augusta (Richmond County)
1851	1	Liberia Packet	Darien (McIntosh County)
1851	1	Liberia Packet	Albany (Dougherty County)
1851	10	Liberia Packet	Union County
1852	11	Ralph Cross	Dalton (Whitfield County)
1852	1	Joseph Maxwell	Savannah (Chatham County)
1852	8	Joseph Maxwell	Morgan County
1853	4	Adeline	Roswell (Fulton County)
1853	3	Adeline	Augusta (Richmond County)

²² Isaac Mayson to William McClain, Augusta, Georgia, 15 February 1851, ACS, LOC.

Table 3, continued.

			Milledgeville (Baldwin County)
1853	3	Adeline	
1853	27	Adeline	Savannah (Chatham County)
1854	4	Gen. Pierce	Macon (Bibb County)
1854	1	Gen. Pierce	Augusta (Richmond County)
			Columbus (Muscogee County)
1854	1	Gen. Pierce	
1854	50	Gen. Pierce	Oglethorpe County
1854	5	Sophia Walker	Bibb County
1854	1	Harp	Augusta (Richmond County)
1854	1	Harp	Savannah (Chatham County)
1854	2	Harp	Bibb County
1855	26	Gen. Pierce	Hinesville (Liberty County)
1855	6	Gen. Pierce	Riceboro (Liberty County)
			Columbus (Muscogee County)
1855	18	Gen. Pierce	
1855	10	Gen. Pierce	Savannah (Chatham County)
1855	1	Cora	Savannah (Chatham County)
1856	2	Elvira Owen	Albany (Dougherty County)
			Adairsville (Cass-Bartlow County)
1856	1	Elvira Owen	
1856	19	Elvira Owen	Augusta (Richmond County)
1856	19	Elvira Owen	Newton (Baker County)
1856	41	Elvira Owen	Gwinnett County
1856	3	Elvira Owen	Savannah (Chatham County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	2	Stevens	Savannah (Chatham County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	44	Stevens	Elbert County
		Mary Caroline	
1858	7	Stevens	
		Mary Caroline	
1859	19	Stevens	Burke County
		Mary Caroline	
1859	5	Stevens	Augusta (Richmond County)
		Mary Caroline	
1860	78	Stevens	Eatonton (Jasper County)
		Mary Caroline	
1860	3	Stevens	Augusta (Richmond County)

Table 3, continued.

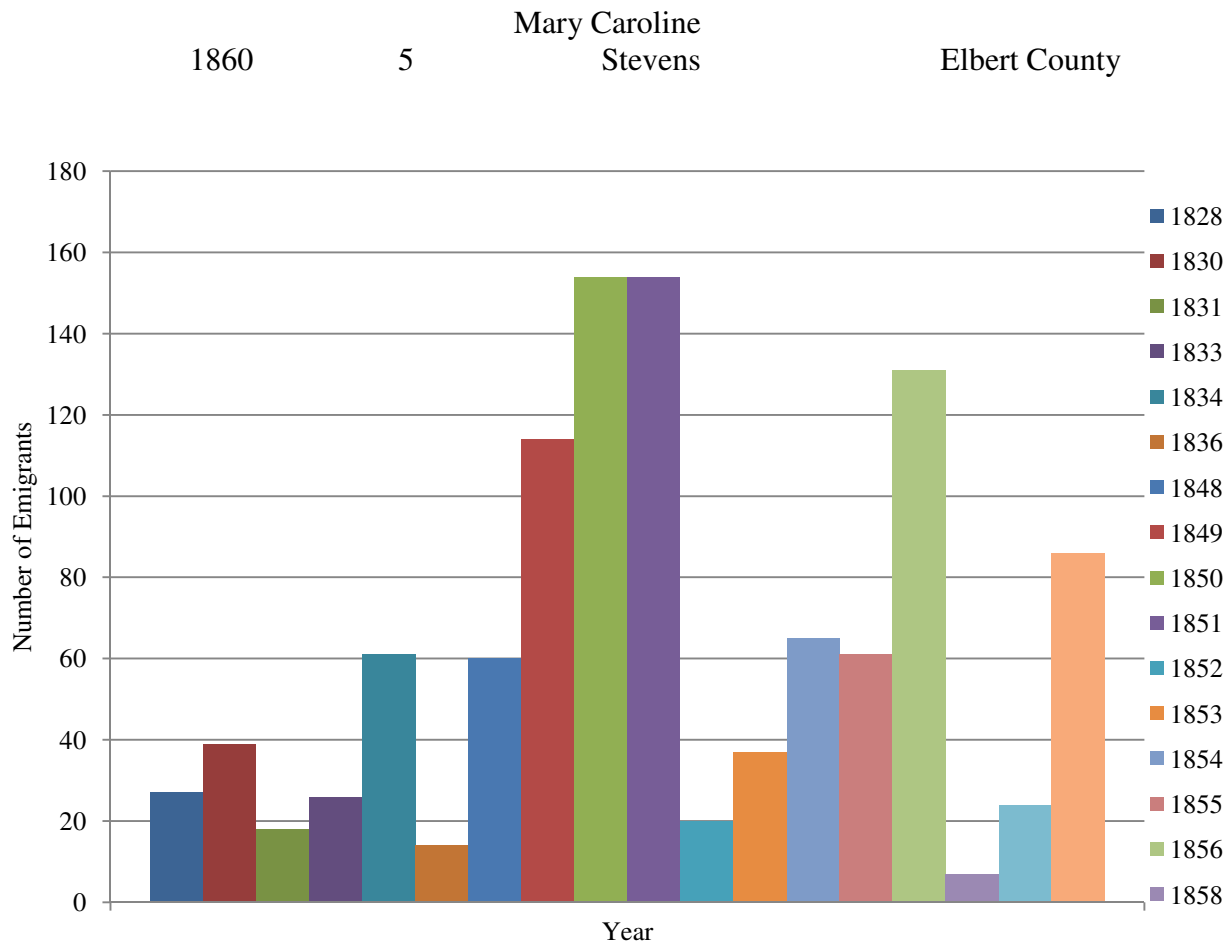


Figure 3. Colonization Expeditions from Georgia to Liberia

Early black separatists like Mayson, who emigrated from a Deep South state, often faced harrowing difficulties in the process. While on their way to meet the ACS ship, *Baltimore*, in Savannah, Mayson along with 54 others, including women and children, were incarcerated by city authorities. While some members of the party had, “secreted themselves,” and were, “keeping close quarters,” anyone else who was not lucky enough to escape back to Augusta or who did not have special passes as slaves to be at large, was placed in jail until the ship arrived in a week or so. While incarcerated prison officials not only charged the migrants for their

imprisonment, they also attempted to make a profit by offering an hour and a half of outside time for \$1.50 a piece.

Even local free black residents were not immune to the authorities' whims. William Houston, a free black man who had lived in Savannah for twelve years, was interrogated by a constable who attempted to jail him with the emigrants for Liberia. Afterwards, Houston resolved to go, "where no man would have the right of treating him in such a manner." J. W. Lugenbeel, a physician and agent in the ACS, went to assist the emigrants and understood the antagonistic environment in Georgia. He reported to ACS Secretary William McClain,

I must confess that my blood boils a little; and were I not fearful of injuring our cause, and perhaps defeating the object I have in view that of sending a company of emigrants from Savannah in the Barque Baltimore I should be strongly tempted to enter a solemn protest against the course pursued by the authorities of this city in regard to our people.²³

Despite numerous setbacks, Mayson was ultimately successful in his separatist endeavor. In April 1851 about 70 blacks from Augusta and another 45 from the surrounding Burke County area emigrated to Liberia, in addition to 27 from Savannah and 14 from Charleston. Their experiences reveal the levels of opposition and danger southern black separatists could face when attempting to leave. Despite these conditions, or perhaps because of them, southern blacks saw colonization as a reasonable means of improving their lives.

The Fugitive Slave Law was a victory for proslavery factions in the South. Some also viewed colonization as a solution to the problem of free blacks. Fueled by racist rhetoric, the Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee state legislatures appropriated funds for colonization during the 1850s. During this same period the ACS witnessed a marked increase in the number of southern black applicants and actual emigrants. These state laws tied manumission to

²³ Isaac Mayson to William McClain, Augusta, Georgia, 4 March 1851, ACS, LOC; J. W. Lugenbeel to William McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 29 March 1851, ACS, LOC; J. W. Lugenbeel to William McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 3 April 1851, ACS, LOC; J. W. Lugenbeel to William McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 1 April 1851, ACS, LOC.

colonization in Liberia. As a result, black emigration increased. In Tennessee black emigration through the ACS increased from 1.7 to 3.4 percent in 1854. (See Table 9 and Figure 9)

Table 9. Colonization Expeditions from Tennessee to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1829	2	Harriet	Southwest Tennessee
1830	14	Liberia	
1833	6	Ajax	
1837	38	Oriental	West Tennessee
1841	24	Rudolph Groning	
1841	19	Union	Lebanon (Wilson County)
1842	85	Maripose	
1846	23	Rothschild	
1850	34	David C. Foster	
1850	15	Liberia Packet	Monroe County
1851	17	Alida	Knoxville (Knox County)
1851	1	Alida	Newport (Cocke County)
1851	14	Liberia Packet	Knoxville (Knox County)
1851	11	Liberia Packet	Rutledge (Grainger County)
1852	13	Julia Ford	Dickson County
1852	29	Zebra	Maury County
1852	2	Zebra	Jackson County
1853	29	Adeline	Kingston (Roane County)
1853	21	Adeline	Monroe County
1853	41	Adeline	Blount County
1853	5	Adeline	Knoxville (Knox County)
1854	12	Gen. Pierce	Williamson County
1854	29	Gen. Pierce	Maury County
1854	38	Gen. Pierce	Davidson County
1854	4	Gen. Pierce	Knoxville (Knox County)
1854	2	Gen. Pierce	Monroe County
1854	28	Sophia Walker	Williamson County
1854	21	Harp	Williamson County

Table 9, continued.

1855	8	Cora	Stewart County
1855	4	Cora	Jonesborough (Washington County)
1855	1	Cora	Nashville (Davidson County)
1855	5	Cora	Cleveland (Bradley County)
1855	10	Cora	Athens (McMinn County)
1855	16	Cora	McMinn County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Maury County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Nashville (Davidson County)
1856	6	Elvira Owen	Sumner County
1856	34	Elvira Owen	Winchester (Franklin County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	4	Stevens	McMinnville (Warren County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	2	Stevens	Sparta (White County)
		Mary Caroline	
1856	7	Stevens	White County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	15	Stevens	Winchester (Franklin County)
		Mary Caroline	
1857	6	Stevens	Cleveland (Bradley County)
		Mary Caroline	Washington College (Washington
1857	1	Stevens	County)
		Mary Caroline	
1857	1	Stevens	Cleveland (Bradley County)
		Mary Caroline	
1859	8	Stevens	Columbia (Maury County)
		Mary Caroline	
1859	13	Stevens	Rogersville (Hawkins County)
		Mary Caroline	
1860	3	Stevens	Winchester (Franklin County)
		Mary Caroline	
1860	5	Stevens	Columbia (Maury County)

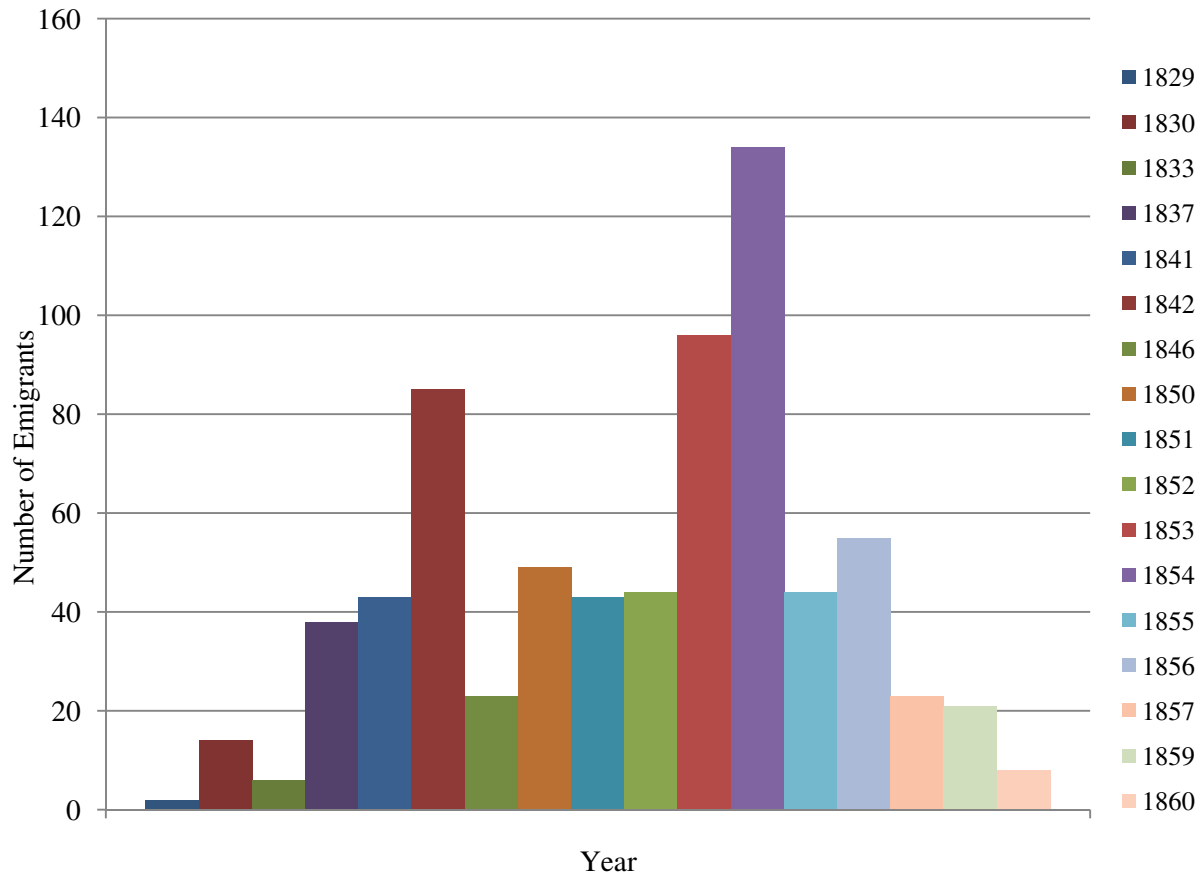


Figure 9. Colonization Expeditions from Tennessee to Liberia

In 1850 the Virginia legislature approved a bill to set aside \$30,000 to go toward black colonization for a period of four years. While the government by no means came close to delivering this amount, it did contribute over \$5,000 to the 1853 expedition by the Virginia Colonization Society which sent 413 emigrants to Liberia. This supportive climate positively affected black participation within the state. In 1857 with the aid the estate executor, John Burroughs, the circuit court granted the slaves of the late L. W. T. Lund of Princess Anne County, Virginia their freedom after they submitted a petition requesting to be emancipated and

sent to Liberia.²⁴ Black separatist participation in the colonization movement increased as white support of colonization increased. Although the era of the Fugitive Slave Act was a politically unfavorable period for free blacks in the U.S., it offered a favorable climate for the colonization movement and early black separatists.

White and black participation in the colonization movement generally increased during times of exigency, but the two groups could be motivated by different considerations. A population must hold grievances before an event can be judged an exigency.²⁵ Although both white colonization and black separatist participation increased due to these national and local exigencies, both groups did not necessarily hold the same grievances. During the 1850s, white participation increased because pro-slavery factions of the colonization movement thought the Fugitive Slave Law was both a victory for slavery and the colonization movement or as an opportunity to be relieved of free blacks. For some black separatists, on the other hand, the law signaled the futility of acquiring civil liberties in the U.S.

Blacks and whites interpreted exigencies differently, because exigencies affected each group differently. In 1832, a year after Nat Turner's Rebellion and the wanton murder of blacks in the South Hampton region of Virginia, black participation increased to record numbers in the state as well as throughout the country. (See Table 10 and Figure 10)

²⁴ Ira Berlins, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 353-356; Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Institution*, 128; Tyler-McGraw, 56-58; Petition of the Former Slaves of the Late L. W. T. Lund to the Circuit Court of Princess Anne County, Virginia, November 1857, in Chancery Court Papers, *Formers Slaves of the Late L. W. T. Land v. John Burroughs*, in *The Southern Debate Over Slavery* Loren Schweninger, Editor, Vol II. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 320; In Maryland support for colonization increased among Baltimore's free black leaders as the national and state racial climates became increasingly antagonistic, Christopher Phillips, *Freedom's Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 224.

²⁵ Ted Robert Gurr, "Sources of Rebellion in Western Societies: Some Quantitative Evidence," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* vol. 391 (September 1970): 128-144, 129; Grievances or relative deprivation occurs through the discrepancy between expectations and outcomes.

Table 10. Colonization Expeditions from Virginia to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1820	9		
1821	26		
1823	13	Oswego	
1824	102	Cyrus	
1825	51	Hunter	
1826	12	Indian Chief	
1827	7	Doris	
1828	23	Doris	
1828	8	Nautilus	
1829	18	Harriet	Norfolk
1829	67	Harriet	Richmond
1829	19	Harriet	Petersburg
1829	18	Harriet	Brunswick County
1829	6	Harriet	
1830	43	Liberia	
1830	32	Montgomery	Newtown (Greene County), Lynchburg, Southhampton County
1830	50	Carolinian	
1830	12	Carolinian	Charlestown (Jefferson County, West Virginia)
1830	7	Carolinian	Hardy County (West Virginia)
1830	7	Carolinian	Essex County
1831	37	Volador	
1831	1	Criterion	
1832	205	James Perkins	
1832	30	American	Southhampton County
1833	42	Roanoke	
1833	37	Jupiter	
1833	2	Margaret Mercer	
1834	52	Jupiter	
1834	7	Argus	
1834	127	Ninus	Rappahannock County
1834	1	Rover	
1836	40	Luna	Staunton
1836	16	Luna	Frederick County

Table 10, continued.

1836	6	Luna	Petersburg
1836	7	Luna	Portsmouth
1837	9	Rondout	
1838	95	Emperor	Essex County, Madison County
1839	11	Saluda	
1841	16	Rudolph Groning	
1843	19	Globe	
1842	26	Maripose	
1844	32	Virginia	
1845	166	Roanoke	
1846	27	Liberia Packet	
1847	24	Liberia Packet	
1848	8	Liberia Packet	
1848	27	Amazon	
1848	134	Liberia Packet	
1849	2	Liberia Packet	Richmond
1850	10	Liberia Packet	Augusta County
1850	5	Liberia Packet	Jefferson County (West Virginia)
1850	9	Liberia Packet	Huttonsville, Randolph County
1850	12	Liberia Packet	Fredricksburg
1850	4	Liberia Packet	Montgomery County
1850	25	Liberia Packet	Lexington
1850	2	Liberia Packet	Lynchburg
1850	1	Liberia Packet	Portsmouth
1850	3	Liberia Packet	Harrisonburg
1851	2	Liberia Packet	Lynchburg
1851	4	Liberia Packet	Portsmouth
1851	33	Morgan Dix	Culpepper County
1851	3	Morgan Dix	Rockbridge County
1851	15	Morgan Dix	Augusta (Hampshire County, West Virginia)
1851	2	Morgan Dix	Shenandoah (Page County)
1851	5	Morgan Dix	Rockingham
1851	28	Morgan Dix	Augusta County
1851	14	Morgan Dix	Rockingham County
1851	1	Morgan Dix	Pendelton County (West Virginia)
1851	35	Morgan Dix	Frederick County
1851	9	Liberia Packet	Albermarle County
1852	6	Ralph Cross	Petersburg
1852	16	Ralph Cross	Henry County
1852	11	Ralph Cross	Louisa County
1852	2	Ralph Cross	Norfolk
1852	7	Ralph Cross	Portsmouth

Table 10, continued.

1852	1	Ralph Cross	Winchester
1852	4	Ralph Cross	Fairfax County
			Hampstead (New Kent County or King
1852	1	Ralph Cross	George County)
1853	16	Banshee	Gloucester (Glouster County)
1853	12	Banshee	Prince Edward County
1853	1	Banshee	Louisa County
1853	37	Banshee	Orange County
1853	1	Banshee	Madison County
1853	14	Banshee	Portsmouth
1853	6	Shirley	Portsmouth
1854	16	Banshee	King George County
1854	7	Banshee	Clarke County
1854	31	Banshee	Sussex County
1854	48	Banshee	Washington County
1854	22	Banshee	Bedford County
1854	8	Banshee	Henry County
1854	6	Banshee	Fairfax County
1854	14	Banshee	Hanover County
1854	2	Banshee	Nottoway (Nottoway County)
1854	1	Banshee	Richmond
1854	1	Banshee	Norfolk
1854	7	Banshee	Portsmouth
			Martinsburg County (Berkeley County, West
1854	8	Sophia Walker	Virginia)
1854	4	Sophia Walker	Jefferson County (West Virginia)
1854	9	Sophia Walker	Romney (Hampshire County, West Virginia)
1854	14	Sophia Walker	Botetourt County
1854	3	Sophia Walker	Manchester
1854	2	Sophia Walker	Petersburgh
1854	1	Sophia Walker	Norfolk
1854	60	Sophia Walker	Henrico County
1854	7	Sophia Walker	King George County
1854	18	Sophia Walker	Amherst County
1854	66	Euphrasia	Fauquier County
1854	9	Euphrasia	Rockbridge County
1854	6	Euphrasia	King George County
1854	7	Euphrasia	Princess Ann County (Virginia Beach)
1854	6	Euphrasia	Alexandria County (Independent City)
1854	2	Euphrasia	Madison County
1854	8	Euphrasia	Roanoke
1854	14	Euphrasia	Manchester (Incorporated into Richmond)

Table 10, continued.

1854	19	Euphrasia	Portsmouth
1854	13	Euphrasia	Richmond
			Shepherdstown (Jefferson County, West Virginia)
1854	1	Euphrasia	Virginia)
1855	7	Cora	Richmond
1855	2	Cora	Portsmouth
1855	18	Cora	Jefferson County (West Virginia)
1855	1	Cora	Marion County (West Virginia)
1855	6	Cora	Madison C. H.
1855	2	Cora	Rockbridge County
1855	3	Cora	Campbell County
1855	6	Cora	Lexington
1855	6	Cora	Richmond
1855	4	Cora	Petersburg
1856	5	Elivira Owen	Northumberland County
1856	7	Elivira Owen	Portsmouth
1856	1	Elivira Owen	Norfolk City
1856	44	Elivira Owen	Kilmarnack - Lancaster County
1856	1	Elivira Owen	
		Mary Caroline	
1856	11	Stevens	Faquier County
		Mary Caroline	
1856	79	Stevens	Albermarle County
		Mary Caroline	
1856	1	Stevens	Portsmouth
		Mary Caroline	
1856	3	Stevens	Suffolk
		Mary Caroline	
1856	8	Stevens	Madison C. H.
		Mary Caroline	Union (Monroe County, West Virginia or
1856	1	Stevens	Floyd County)
		Mary Caroline	
1857	6	Stevens	Orange County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	3	Stevens	Hanover County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	1	Stevens	Bremo Bluff (Fluvanna County)
		Mary Caroline	
1857	5	Stevens	Northumberland County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	1	Stevens	Romeny
		Mary Caroline	
1857	2	Stevens	Augusta County

Table 10, continued.

1857	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Petersburg
1857	8	Mary Caroline Stevens	Manchester
1857	18	Mary Caroline Stevens	Richmond
1857	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Lynchburg
1857	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Fluvanna County
1857	66	Mary Caroline Stevens	Prince Edward County
1857	13	Mary Caroline Stevens	Roanoke County
1857	2	Mary Caroline Stevens	Charlotte County
1858	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Harrisonburg
1858	9	Mary Caroline Stevens	Nelson County
1858	8	Mary Caroline Stevens	Botetourt County
1858	4	Mary Caroline Stevens	Hanover County
1859	23	Mary Caroline Stevens	Northumberland County
1859	12	Mary Caroline Stevens	Liberty - Bedford County
1859	15	Mary Caroline Stevens	Bedford County
1859	4	Mary Caroline Stevens	Hanover County
1860	17	Mary Caroline Stevens	Hanover County
1860	2	Mary Caroline Stevens	Winchester
1860	23	Mary Caroline Stevens	Brownsburg, Rockbridge County

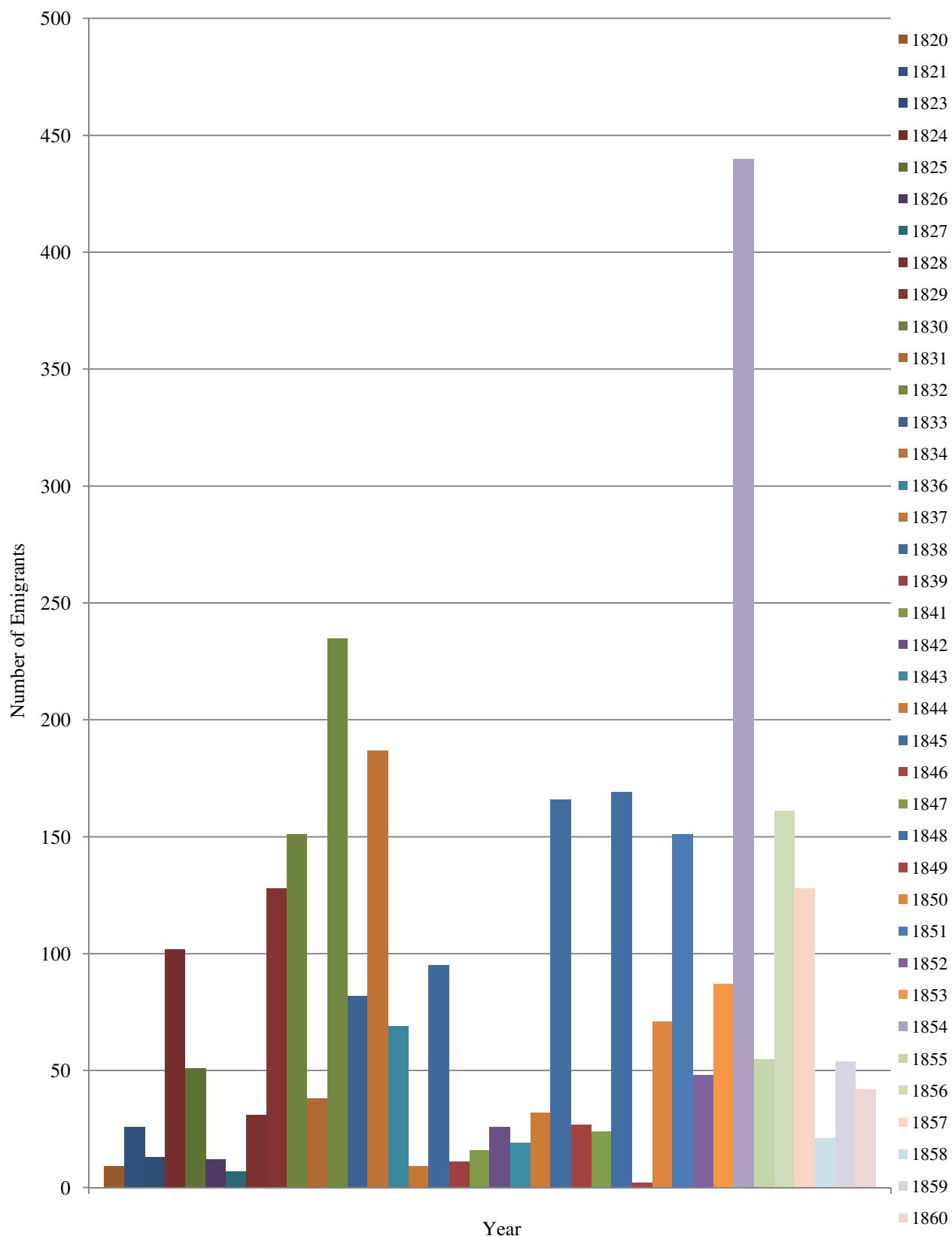


Figure 10. Colonization Expeditions from Virginia to Liberia

White support of colonization also increased in the years following the rebellion. Several white residents of Northhampton County, Virginia petitioned the legislature in 1831 to forcibly remove free blacks from the county and, if practical, to colonize them in Liberia. Residents cited the, “vicious habits of most of them,” and their inferiority to whites in “intelligence & information.” The group went on to cite free blacks’ “dangerous intrigues with the slaves,” and the resulting “worst evils from their increase.” Although an 1832 appropriation bill which included compulsory deportations did not pass, the following year the legislature approved a bill to set aside \$18,000 annually for five years to aid the ACS and the state’s free black emigrants to Liberia.²⁶ Indifferent to how black separatists and white colonizationists perceived the exigency, blacks associating it with white retaliation and violence and whites associating it with black destruction, both groups similarly increased their movement activities during the period.

National exigencies also had local impacts that affected black participation by state. During the era of Nat Turner’s Rebellion, states passed restrictive laws against free blacks. During the wake of the Rebellion two emigrants from Florida were the first to emigrate to Liberia from St. Augustine in 1833. In Baltimore interest in colonization peaked in the 1830s when more and more free blacks debated its pros and cons as race relations grew increasingly stressed.²⁷ During the early 1830s the first emigrants from Louisiana left for Liberia and in 1834 Washington D.C. witnessed its largest expedition of twenty-nine emigrants from the city. (See Tables 22 and 10 and Figures 22 and 10)

²⁶ Tyler-McGraw, 46-47, 72; “A. P. Upshur et al., Northhampton County to Virginia Legislature, Acts Passed at a General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Begun and Held at the Capitols in the City of Richmond, on Monday, the Fifth Day of December, In the Year of our Lord, one Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty One,” in *The Southern Debate Over Slavery*, Loren Schweninger, Editor, Vol I. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 128-131.

²⁷ Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 215.

Table 5. Colonization Expeditions from Louisiana to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/Country
1833	2	Ajax	
1835	9	Louisiana	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1842	82	Maripose	
1844	6	Lime Rock	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1850	7	David C. Foster	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1851	22	Alida	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1851	32	Alida	St. Mary's Parish
1852	1	Julia Ford	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1852	23	Zebra	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1854	3	Sophia Walker Mary Caroline	
1859	5	Stevens	Jackson (East Feliciana Parish)
1859	42	Rebecca	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)
1859	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	New Orleans (Orleans Parish)

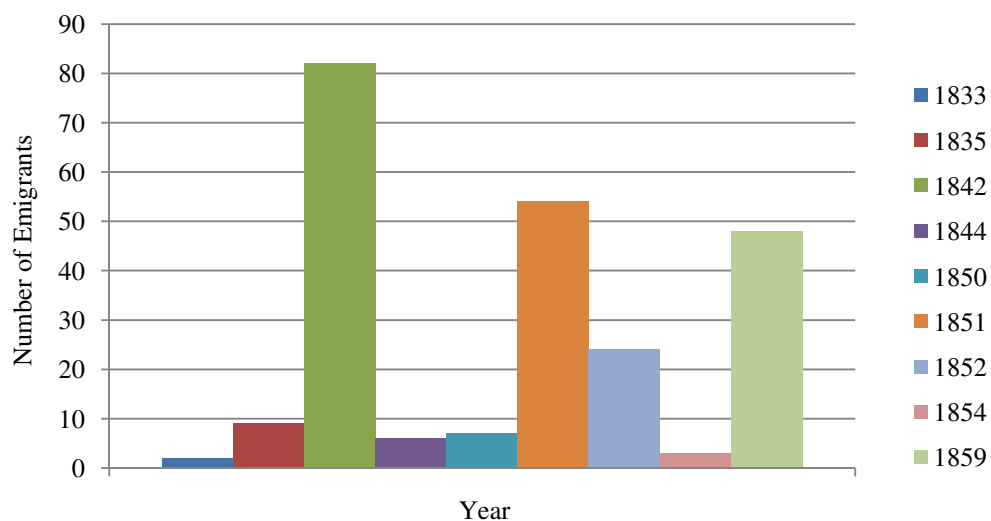


Figure 5. Colonization Expeditions from Louisiana to Liberia

Table 11. Colonization Expeditions from Washington D.C. to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town
1829	2	Harriet	Washington D. C.
1830	1	Montgomery	Washington D. C.
1832	12	American	Washington D. C.
1834	9	Argus	Washington D. C.
1834	29	Argus	Alexandria, D.C.
1837	2	Roundout	Washington D. C.
1844	7	Virginia	Washington D. C.
1847	12	Liberia Packet	Washington D. C.
1848	10	Liberia Packet	Washington D. C.
1848	5	Liberia Packet	Georgetown, D.C.
1849	1	Liberia Packet	Washington D. C.
1849	1	Liberia Packet	Georgetown, D.C.
1860	1	Mary Caroline Stevens	Washington D. C.

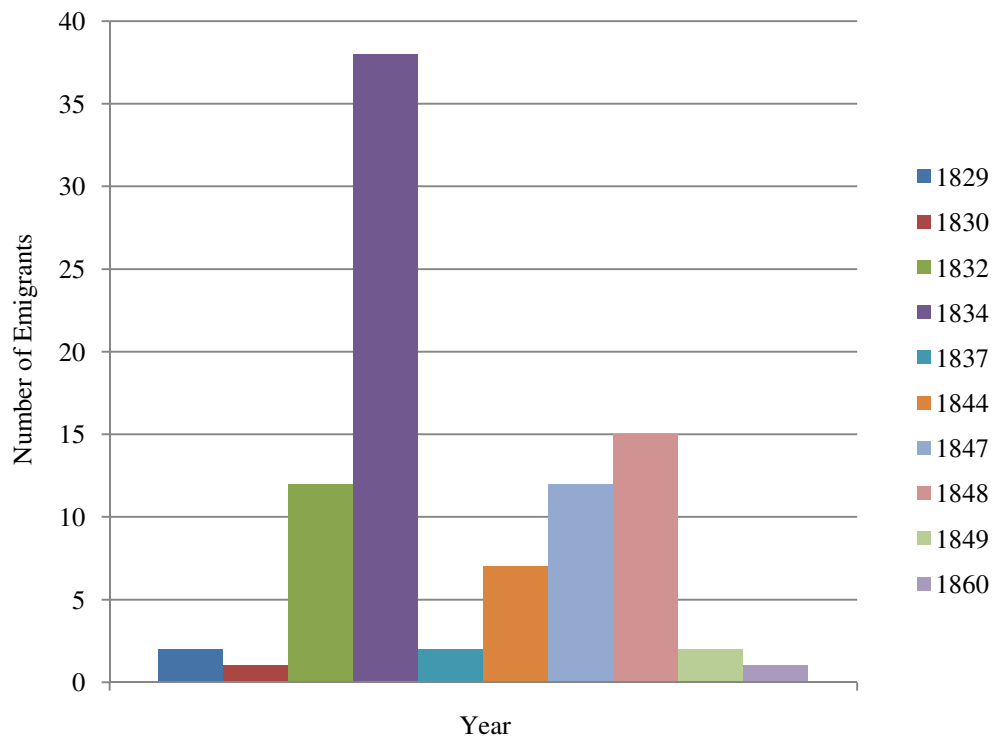


Figure 11. Colonization Expeditions from Washington D.C. to Liberia

In 1831 Tennessee prohibited the movement of free blacks into the state and required that emancipated slaves leave. Some citizens of the state wanted to further curtail the presence of free blacks in Tennessee. Petitioning the state legislature to appropriate funds toward colonization, white residents in 1833 cited free blacks’ “enlarge disabilities and degradation,” and their humiliating positions which may incite them to “inflict evils,” upon society. The General Assembly supported the measure and approved that \$10 be given to the Tennessee State Colonization Society for each black removed from Middle Tennessee to Liberia. The following year in 1834, one of the last states in the South to deny black male property holders suffrage,

Tennessee finally rescinded that right.²⁸ Although the ongoing recession may have caused the laws not to have an immediate impact on colonization expeditions, black separatist participation within the state continued to increase by about 18% over the next three years.

In Kentucky, after 1850 and the passage of a law requiring all emancipated slaves to leave the state, black separatist participation saw a sharp increase. While only eight expeditions were initiated within the state prior to 1850, 64 occurred after the implementation of this law. (See Table 4 and Figure 4) In South Carolina and Mississippi, after the proscription of testamentary manumissions in 1841 and 1842 respectively, each state also saw a dramatic increase in the number of black participants. (See Tables 8 and 6 and Figures 8 and 6)

Table 4. Colonization Expeditions from Kentucky to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1833	102	Ajax	
1840	71	Saluda	
			Paducah (McCracken County), Louisville
1841	21	Union	(Jefferson County)
1846	36	Rothschild	
1846	3	Mary Wilkes	
1844	14	Lime Rock	
1848	28	Nehemiah Rich	
1849	19	Clintonia Wright	
1850	19	David C. Foster	
1851	31	Alida	
1852	4	Julia Ford	Glasgow (Barren County)
1852	1	Julia Ford	Nelson County

²⁸ Jonathan M Atkins, *Parties, Politics, and the Sectional Conflict in Tennessee, 1832-1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 4; "Philip Lindsley et al., to the Tennessee General Assembly, 25 October 1833, Legislative Petitions," in Schweninger, *The Southern Debate Over Slavery*, Vol. 1, 143-145.

Table 4, continued.

1852	1	Julia Ford	Marion County
1852	2	Julia Ford	Shelbyville (Shelby County)
1852	1	Julia Ford	Garrard County
1852	7	Julia Ford	Christian County
1852	1	Zebra	Shelbyville (Shelby County)
1852	4	Zebra	Logan County
1852	1	Zebra	Jefferson County
1852	2	Zebra	Louisville (Jefferson County)
1852	2	Zebra	Paris (Bourbon County)
1852	1	Zebra	Bardstown (Nelson County)
1852	9	Zebra	Barren County
1852	1	Zebra	Georgetown (Scott County)
1853	5	Banshee	Louisville (Jefferson County)
1854	24	Banshee	Fayette County
1854	12	Banshee	Logan County
1854	18	Banshee	Shelby County
1854	3	Banshee	Woodford County
1854	2	Banshee	Jessamine County
1854	2	Banshee	Nicholas County
1854	5	Banshee	Muhlenburg County
1854	3	Banshee	Christian County
1854	36	Sophia Walker	Danville (Boyle County)
1854	1	Sophia Walker	Mercer County
1854	2	Sophia Walker	Muhlenburgh County
1854	3	Sophia Walker	Spencer County
1854	2	Sophia Walker	Simpson County
1854	3	Gen. Pierce	Christian County
1854	8	Gen. Pierce	Washington County
1854	9	Gen. Pierce	Rutherford (Harlen County)
1855	17	Cora	Casey County
1855	19	Cora	Woodford County
1855	4	Cora	Fayette County
1855	5	Cora	Barron County
1855	2	Cora	Boyle County
1855	2	Cora	Shelby County
1855	1	Cora	Lincoln County
1855	1	Cora	Jessamine County
1855	1	Cora	Louisville (Jefferson County)
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Fayette County
1856	23	Elvira Owen	Woodford County

Table 4, continued.

1856	1	Elvira Owen	Franklin County
1856	18	Elvira Owen	Bourbon County
1856	5	Elvira Owen	Nelson County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Simpson County
1856	7	Elvira Owen	Shelby County
1856	7	Elvira Owen	Muhlenburg County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Fayette County
1856	1	Elvira Owen	Daviess County
1856	2	Elvira Owen	Shelby County
		Mary Caroline	
1856	19	Stevens	Bath County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	34	Stevens	Mercer County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	9	Stevens	Ohio County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	9	Stevens	Christian County
		Mary Caroline	
1857	1	Stevens	Shelby County
		Mary Caroline	
1858	14	Stevens	Princeton (Caldwell County)
		Mary Caroline	
1858	6	Stevens	Boyle County
		Mary Caroline	
1859	1	Stevens	Shelby County
		Mary Caroline	
1860	1	Stevens	Shelbyville (Shelby County)
		Mary Caroline	
1860	2	Stevens	Lexington (Fayette County)
1862	13	Justina	Nelson County
		Mary Caroline	
1862	1	Stevens	Shelbyville (Shelby County)

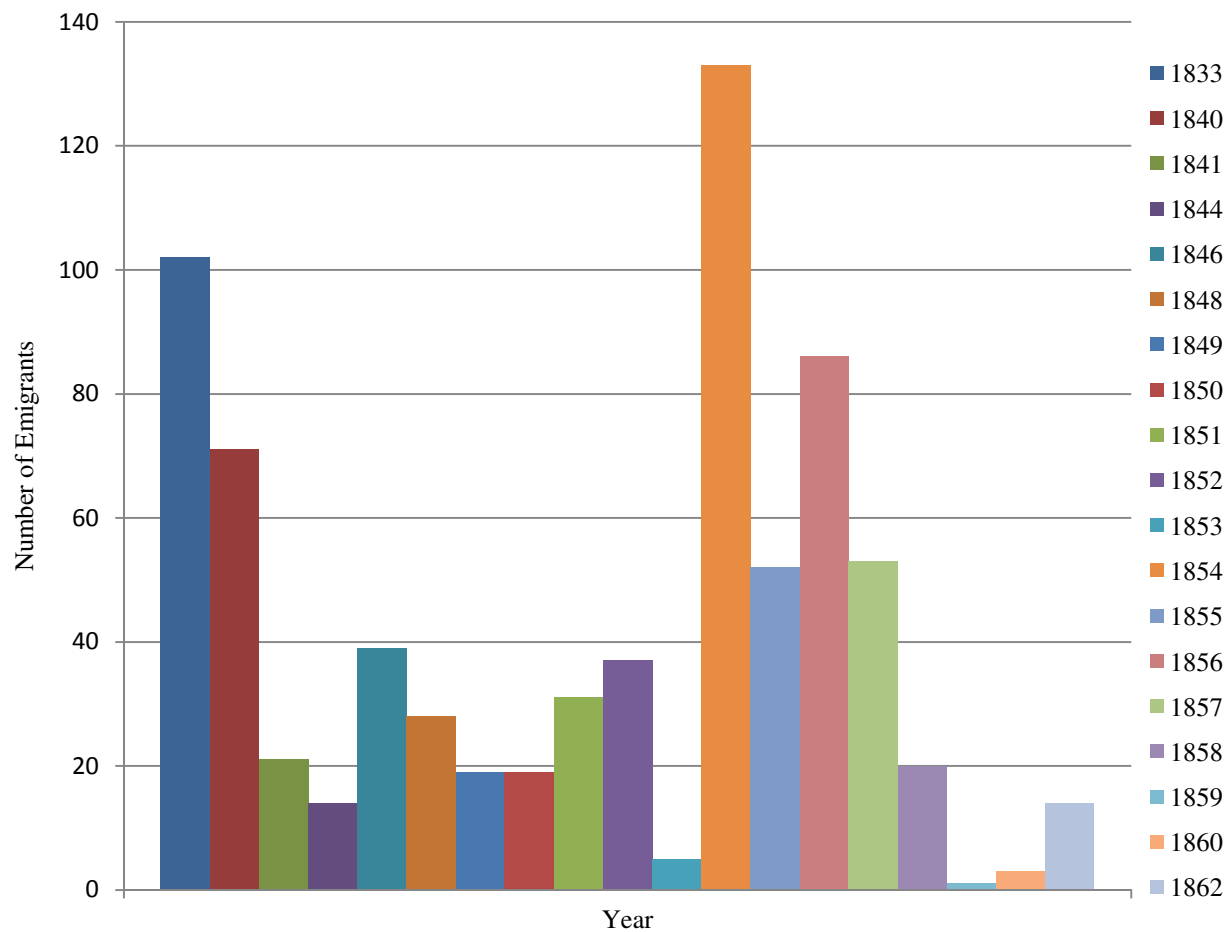


Figure 4. Colonization Expeditions from Kentucky to Liberia

Table 6. Colonization Expeditions from Mississippi to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/Country
1830	8	Carolinian	
1834	69	Rover	
1836	42	Swift	
1838	37	Mail	
1843	73	Renown	Jefferson County
Table 6, continued.			
1844	72	Lime Rock Nehemiah	
1848	33	Rich	
1849	142	Laura Clintonia	Jefferson County
1849	2	Wright	
1852	1	Julia Ford	Centreville (Wilkinson County)
1852	2	Ralph Cross	Fayettehill (Simpson County)
1852	8	Zebra	Vicksburg (Warren County)
1853	5	Shirley	Kemper County
1856	14	Elvira Owen Mary Caroline	Columbus (Lowndes County)
1856	1	Stevens Mary Caroline	Woodville (Wilkinson County)
1859	3	Stevens Mary Caroline	Jackson (Hinds County)
1860	15	Stevens	Pontotoc (Pontotoc County)

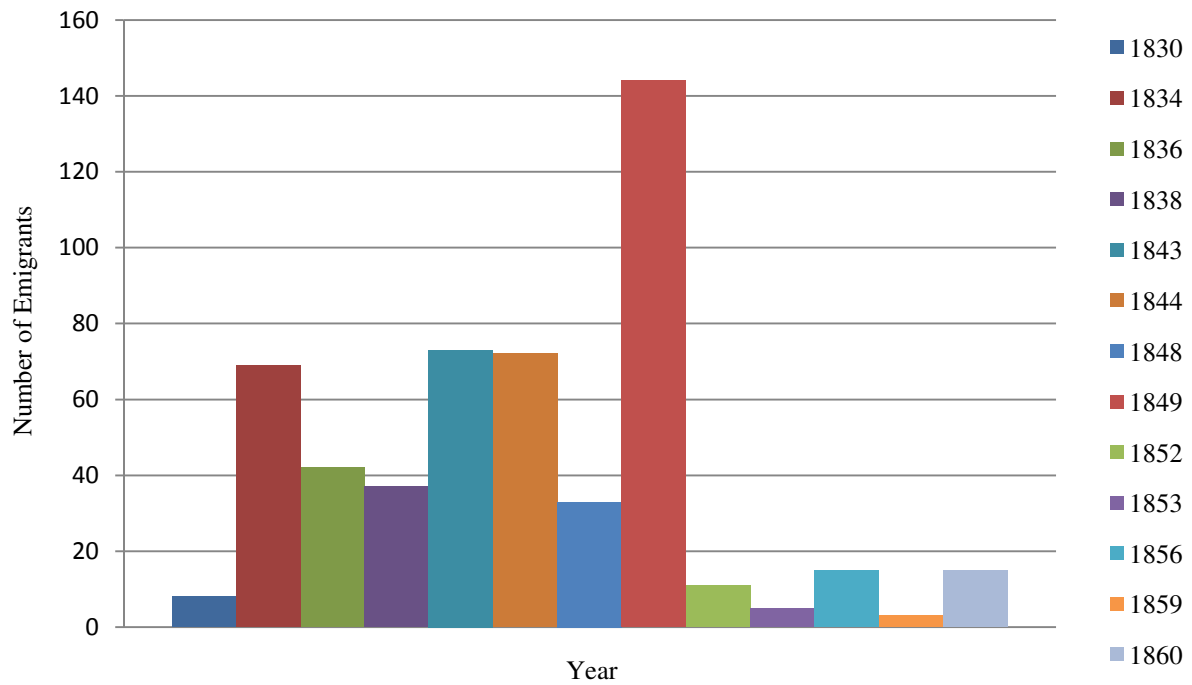


Figure 6. Colonization Expeditions from Mississippi to Liberia

Table 8. Colonization Expeditions from South Carolina to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Ship	Town/County
1833	141	Hercules	Charleston (Charleston County)
1842	13	Maripose	
1843	3	Renown	
1845	1	Roanoke	
1848	55	Col Howard	
1848	2	Liberia Packet	
1849	63	Huma	
1849	11	Liberia Packet	Charleston (Charleston County)

Table 8, continued.

1850	13	Chieftan	Charleston (Charleston County)
1850	9	Liberia Packet	Charleston (Charleston County)
1851	9	Baltimore	Abbeville District (Abbeville County)
1851	2	Baltimore	Orangeburg (Orangeburg County)
1851	1	Baltimore	Beaufort (Beaufort County)
1851	14	Baltimore	Charleston (Charleston County)
1851	2	Baltimore	Hamburgh (Aiken County)
1852	32	Joseph Maxwell	Lancaster District (Lancaster County)
1852	1	Joseph Maxwell	Camden (Kershaw County)
1852	3	Joseph Maxwell	Charleston (Charleston County)
1854	7	Gen. Pierce	Greenville (Greenville County)
1859	9	Mary Caroline Stevens	Charleston (Charleston County)
1859	5	Mary Caroline Stevens	Columbia (Richland County)
1860	29	Mary Caroline Stevens	Newberry District (Newberry County)
1860	2	Mary Caroline Stevens	Charleston (Charleston County)

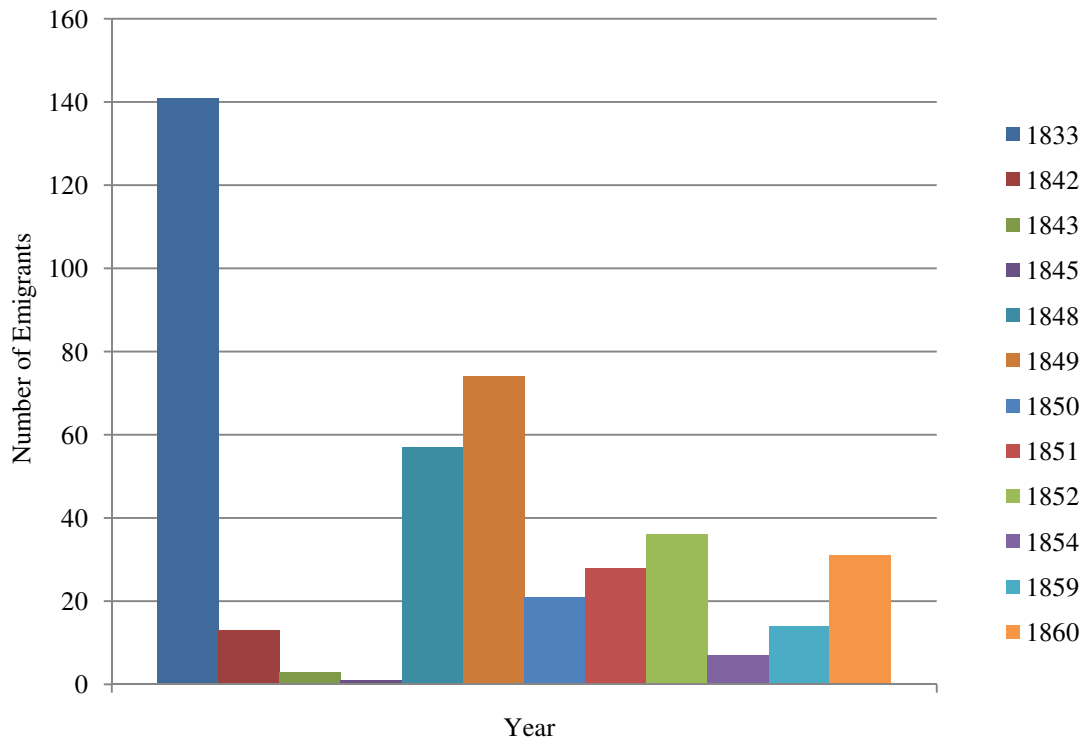


Figure 8. Colonization Expeditions from South Carolina to Liberia

Northern blacks openly expressed their disagreement over what they perceived to be a type of coerced emigration. In New York one black writer declared of the black community,

We are no friends to any of the schemes of forced colonization which have been brought forward from time to time. We do not regard the colored population as an evil to be got rid of. We know that here they form a valuable part of the community; and if they are not so elsewhere, we think that part of the fault is to be found in the disabilities under which they are placed. We wish the emigration to Africa to be a voluntary intelligent hopeful emigration; that men should go to Liberia, as they go to California, because they can better their condition.²⁹

In many instances northern blacks opposed colonization because of the use of racial arguments by and motivations of white supporters, southern blacks on the other hand emphasized personal motivations for leaving and did not focus on the negative rhetoric of the colonization movement.

²⁹ "The Colored Race," 25 February 1853, *Frederick Douglass Paper*, Accessible Archives, <<http://www.accessible.com/accessible/index.jsp>> (Retrieved February 2010).

Black participation in colonization movements increased during periods of intense discrimination. Southern whites viewed free blacks very suspiciously and many southern legislatures restricted their immigration. In 1793, Virginia outlawed free black immigration, which was followed by South Carolina in 1800 and Kentucky in 1806. The governments of North Carolina and Georgia allowed free black immigration, but imposed large fines and taxes on anyone entering their state. Although similar laws were not passed in Tennessee until 1831, their intentions were identical.³⁰ These laws prompted black participation in colonization movements and show the importance of space when attempting to restrict black mobility.

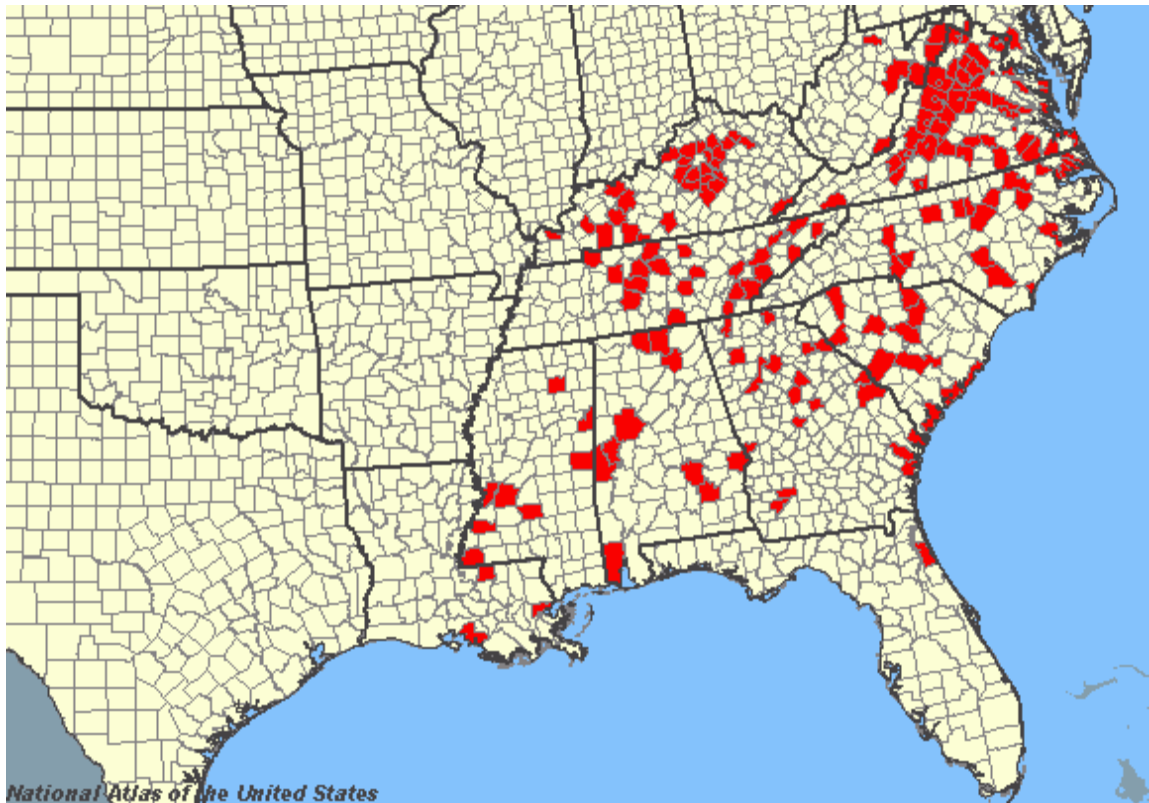
Spatial proximity or the location and distance of one supporter to another is an important variable in determining where movement participation emerges.³¹ Historian Eric Burin considers the importance of space by examining movement activity in a single county through multiple manumissions by different slave owners at the same time. He attributes the trend to the “conjunctive emancipations” of slave owners who collaborate with one another in order to free slave family members for convenience and emigration to Liberia. He finds that 39% of all manumitters freed their slaves in this fashion. Burin also acknowledges this occurrence also took place among slave owners in disparate counties as well.³²

A comparison of colonization activity by county resembles a cluster pattern, whereby colonization endeavors are undertaken in counties in close proximity to one another. (See Figure 22)

³⁰ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 124; Atkins, *Parties, Politics, and, the Sectional Conflict in Tennessee*, 4.

³¹ How key actors, organizations, and institutions relate to and affect other actors, organizations, and institutions across space is critical to understanding social movement operations, Deborah G. Martin and Byron Miller, “Space and Contentious Politics,” *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 8 no. 2 (June 2003): pp. 143-156, 149

³² Burin, *A Peculiar Solution*, 75-76.



Emigrants left from counties highlighted in red.

Figure 22. Southern County Colonization Expeditions to Liberia

Information sharing, such as in the case of Joseph Glown may account for this phenomena occurring throughout the South. Joseph Glown, originally from the Orangeburg District of South Carolina, traveled and talked with blacks in other counties about emigrating to Liberia. His duties as an early separatist leader illustrate the importance of space in determining where black separatist activity emerged. Glown travelled outside of the state to speak with supporters. In Savannah, Georgia, he met Westly Williams, from whom he gained all of his “information from concerning of the contry.” In 1851 Williams was preparing to leave for Liberia, but he also helped Glown and his followers back in South Carolina gather information. In a letter to Secretary McClain, Glown thanked McClain for sending information to Ned Hall,

another early black separatist leader in Georgia, and for providing “him sufficient information about going to Liberia.”³³ Glown’s letter indicates a dynamic separatist movement where numerous local leaders influenced participation in other locales by crossing county and state boundaries to engage with movement supporters.

The diffusion of information may also account for successive colonization endeavors where movements are initiated in the same place at different times.³⁴ Using county level data this trend is most observable in southern cities and surrounding areas with large free black populations. In these areas news regarding emigrant experiences would be most accessible to other potential participants and thus have greater influence on their decision whether to stay in the U.S. or emigrate to Liberia.³⁵ This phenomena, though more readily observable in the postwar era, initially begins to occur during the antebellum period.

Although slaves were an underclass in American society, they cultivated their limited resources in order to further their collective agendas. The sharing of information was extremely important in increasing participation and interest in black separatism. Cledwell Whitted was a slave on a large plantation when he wrote the ACS in 1851. He and his wife resided in Hillsboro, North Carolina, yet were able to read the *African Repository*, “with great care and attention.” S. Wesley Jones traveled to Huntsville, Alabama where many of his acquaintances read the newspaper and read to “those who could not Read themselves.”³⁶ Although whites controlled the *African Repository*, blacks still learned about Liberia and other successful

³³ Joseph Glown to McLane, Savannah, Georgia, 3 January 1851, ACS, LOC.

³⁴ Information diffusion refers to the process of how knowledge about a movement is shared. Diffusion processes are critical to understanding the occurrence of collective action as well as the protest symbols and tactics, David Strang and Sarah A. Soule, “Diffusion in Organizations and Social Movements: From Hybrid Corn to Poison Pill,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 265-291, 266-67.

³⁵ Close spatial proximity to one another also influence the spread of suffrage support among upper and middle class urban women; McCammon, *Stirring up suffrage sentiment: The formation of the state woman suffrage organizations, 1866-1914*,” 457.

³⁶ Cledwell Whitted, Hillsboro, North Carolina, ACS, LOC; S. Wesley Jones, Huntsville, Alabama, 18 April 1852, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” 224-225.

emigrants. The newspaper wanted to increase black support of colonization and so often published letters from enthusiastic black migrants. This constant circulation of information regarding other black participants helped to encourage further participation.

When Jones wrote to the ACS he often cited negative rumors and “deceptive advisors”, who impeded interest in colonization with negative reports. Jones used the newspaper to spread positive news writing,

I have used some efforts to make the number of the Repository that I have relieved, useful, so far as it lay in my power to do so. I have read and caused to be read to the superstitious and prejudiced of our people, every opportunity, and I am proud to say, with some success. I have not failed in but a single instance, of removing old prejudices; and I still think, with patience in one hand, and perseverance on the other, I may succeed even in that instance.³⁷

Although Jones never immigrated to Liberia, it does not negate the significance of his participation within the movement. Only a small minority of black separatists actually left the South, but thousands more showed their support by attending meetings, reading newsletters, and generally showing concern for Liberia and black emigrants abroad. The *African Repository* allowed blacks throughout the South to cultivate group identity as nationalists. Particularly in the south, the newspaper, a form of “print capitalism,” helped establish an imagined community of black separatists.³⁸ Its diffusion supported collective action among disparate regions and groups.

Just as blacks in the postwar South relied on the *African Repository* for information diffusion, they also relied upon the first hand recommendation of those blacks who had already emigrated.³⁹ Though the ACS did cite stories of emigrant hardship, it did not print many letters from disappointed settlers in its publication, emphasizing instead the resiliency and ultimate

³⁷ S. Wesley Jones to McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 7 November 1856, “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” in 225-226; S. Wesley Jones to McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 12 June 1848, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” 216-217.

³⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* 13th edition, (New York: Verso, 2003), 5-6; Imagine communities are socially constructed by a group of people who feel an invisible connection to one another and are often prerequisite to the development of nationalism.

³⁹ Tyler-McGraw, 69.

success of its participants. While these efforts were helpful, first hand testimony had a greater influence on converting separatist supporters into actual emigrants than any article read in a newspaper ever could. In North Carolina, after Sunday Peele came back from Liberia in 1830 with a negative report, no one from his native county ever left for Liberia again. Other participants were not so fortunate and were forced to remain in their new homeland.⁴⁰ Although a single report may not have the same impact on colonization participation in larger cities as it may have in a small county, the report of success or failure once in Liberia was nonetheless vital to the continued interest in separatism in the black community back in the U.S.

Likewise, good reports brought increased interest in the movement.⁴¹ When S. Wesley Jones visited the Sampson family, who lived about fifteen miles outside of Huntsville he reported that the, “whole family seemed anxious to emigrate to Liberia.”⁴² He noted that Sampson’s wife was particularly gratified as her brother, M. H. Smith, was a member of the Liberian legislature. In Savannah, Georgia some free black families were interested in emigration. Many were the friends of John Broughton, whose wife’s sister and aunt resided in the country.⁴³ With this personal account about success in Liberia, Broughton probably had no problem with the agreement with his former master that he work to buy his freedom and then to emigrate as well.

As in the case of postwar separatist movements and black participation in British movements during the Revolutionary Era, the majority of black participants in the antebellum

⁴⁰ Clegg, *In the Price of Liberty*, 74-75; Schweninger, *The Southern Debate Over Slavery*, Vol I, 172-173, “Petition of Jehru Jones Jr. to the South Carolina Senate, October 1840, Records of the General Assembly # 47, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Certificate, William Dayton, 28 October 1840,” Jehu Jones requested in exile to return to the state after being disappointed with the ACS and Liberia. The legislature rejected the petition

⁴¹ Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 217; The favorable first hand accounts of three former native residents and a minister who emigrated sometime prior greatly influenced the choice of black separatists in Baltimore to emigrate to Trinidad.

⁴² S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, Huntsville, Alabama, 18 April 1852, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” 224-225.

⁴³ John Broughton to William McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 17 February 1851, ACS, LOC.

period were from the lower class in the South. Of the more than 11,000 emigrants sent by the ACS to Liberia, over half were emancipated slaves.⁴⁴ In the antebellum South, a three tier class system evolved, consisting of lower, middle, and upper economic groups from both races. This dissertation examines class largely by occupation. Slaves, by their very definition were unable to accumulate property, and so restricted to the lowest class in antebellum society. Poor free blacks working in unskilled occupations comprise the other members of this group. Middle class blacks are comprised of skilled free artisans and small land owners, while the black upper class consists of professional occupants with substantial incomes.⁴⁵

The socioeconomic status of early black separatist can be demonstrated by examining a random ship roster listing the occupations of black emigrants. The *Liberia Packet*, a ship of the ACS, sailed from Norfolk, Virginia on January 26, 1850 with 136 emigrants. Of that number, 134 emigrants were from Virginia and North Carolina, while two individuals were from Pennsylvania and New York. Listed occupations for men included farmer, coachman, shoemaker, blacksmith, teacher, trader and house servant. Occupations for women were washer, cook, seamstress, house worker and farm worker. Of all the male working emigrants, possible two individuals, the teacher and trader, or roughly 6 percent, were members of the upper class. The overwhelming majority of the participants were from the lower class and eighty percent of the working men who were emigrating to Liberia listed their occupations as farmers.

⁴⁴ Cornelius, *Slave Missions and the Black Church in the Antebellum South*, 160-162.

⁴⁵ Sociologists Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels describe class members as either the owners of the means of production or workers and describe that society. The two researchers also acknowledge a middle class, who align themselves with owners, but whose individual members are being constantly hurled down into the proletariat by the action of competition, Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *Marx & Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy* Lewis S. Feuer, Editor, 1-41, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1959,) 8, 31. This dissertation supports this view of the middle class as primarily forming a new segment of either the upper class, 'petty bourgeoisie or the lower class, new working class. For theories on the petty bourgeoisie see Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1975), 14-16; For theories on the new working class see Serge Mallet, *Essays on the New Working Class* Editors and Translators, Dick Howard and Dean Savage, (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975), 40-43.

The occupations of women emigrants were more diverse, but were similarly classified as lower class positions. Twenty-seven percent of working women were washers, while the same percentage of women was house workers. Cooks accounted for nine percent of the occupations, while seamstress accounted for double that number. Eighteen percent of women were also engaged in multiple occupations including at least one of the previous forms of employment in addition to being a farm worker.⁴⁶ Although only providing a snapshot of emigrants, the overall trend is clear; the majority of participants in the colonization movement were from the black lower class in the South. These participants, though working with the ACS, were simultaneously furthering the development of early black separatism.

Slaves in the United States were placed in the lowest class position, they were, in some instances, however, able to improve their lives economically, before acquiring legal freedom. In Tennessee, an owner considered emancipating his nineteen slaves if they could be taken to Liberia for free. The writer noted their ambiguous status, “Although they are slaves they have been living to themselves for about 20 years they have supported themselves on land of their masters and are tolerable farmers.” This group of slaves had received no education, but all were “naturally smart,” and had a moral character “perhaps good as any family of blacks in this country.”⁴⁷ Similarly, some free blacks, though acquiring legal emancipation, were severely impoverished, and in some cases lived with slaves as hired hands on plantations. A free black man in Mobile, Alabama wanted to emigrate, but lamented that because he was a “free coloured man,” he therefore had “very little money,” to pay the cost of transporting himself, his wife and

⁴⁶ “The Late Expedition to Liberia,” *The African Repository* 26 no. 4 (April 1850): 103-107.

⁴⁷ Sara Rhea to Gurley, ? Tennessee, 24 May 1833, ACS, LOC.

child to Liberia.⁴⁸ Most free blacks and slaves belonged in this bottom half socio-economic ladder.

Some free blacks in the South were skilled artisans. In North Carolina, most slaves worked in the fields, but some were skilled blacksmiths, wagoners, barbers, washerwomen, riverboat workers, pilots, or draymen.⁴⁹ Others were small landowners who also belonged to the middle class. A few large land owners in limited vicinities belonged to the upper echelon of southern society. Although blacks in the South were not socially and economically identical, the system of southern race relations worked to ethnically unite the masses of blacks and in doing so bridged most economic divisions.⁵⁰ Racial inequality undoubtedly formed the core grievance among early black separatists in antebellum South, but the economic aspirations of the black lower class who composed the majority of participants in the colonization movement were also motivating factors.

Historian Patrick Rael contends that southern blacks generally lacked the resources needed to organize or engage in a movement and argues that the foundations of a Black Nationalist identity can only be found among a small minority of black elite in the North. Rael writes that black northerners were “sufficiently literate to form a community of writers, publishers, and readers who could sustain a flow of nationalist ideas in print; and marginally inextricably linked to an urban economy and values,” and who also composed “enough of the bourgeois social order to be steeped in its ethos yet sufficiently alienated to resent exclusion.”⁵¹ Outside of publishing, southern lower and middle class blacks possessed all of these prerequisites. Although racially oppressive, areas of southern society did allow for the

⁴⁸ Alfred Evans, Mobile, Alabama, 16 May 1848, ACS, LOC.

⁴⁹ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 176

⁵⁰ Berlins, *Slaves Without Masters*, 269.

⁵¹ Rael, 213.

development of a nationalist rhetoric among blacks, one far more radical than that of the North and its small class of black petit bourgeoisie could have ever produced.

Historian Ira Berlin suggests the presence of free blacks actually impeded radical progress in race relations. The fundamentally conservative black upper middle class adopted the ethos of materialism and disassociated themselves from the slave population. In New York one free black writer proclaimed, “The free people of colour will never go to Africa. Colonizationists had as well abandon the scheme at once. It is too absurd and trifling, for men of education and talents to promote or believe in. I speak boldly on this subject, for while I possess but one voice, I know that I speak the sentiments of nearly all my brethren.”⁵² The writer differentiates between free blacks and slaves by extolling the decision of free blacks in the North to oppose colonization and implying the decision of some slaves to support it as illogical. The writer, like other northern elites, claims to speak for the black masses, but fails to understand the rational motivations driving southern blacks to participate in the colonization movement. Northern black members of the petit bourgeois or upper middle class held some of the same prejudices held by whites against poor free blacks and slaves.⁵³ Such conditions could work to impede movement participation however these features of black elitism were not as prevalent in southern societies.

Middle class blacks in the South also adopted materialist and capitalist goals, but unlike the north they also maintained a degree of radicalism. In Tuscaloosa, Alabama several free blacks were interested in emigration, but were prevented from emigrating immediately because

⁵² “For the Freedom’s Journal. Colonization Society,” 7 September 1827, *Freedom’s Journal*, Accessible Archives, <<http://www.accessible.com/accessible/index.jsp>> (Retrieved 2010).

⁵³ Berlin, 270-272; In 18th century Surinam successful free coloureds felt superior to the masses of slaves and poor free blacks. Free coloureds’ ownership of slaves hastened their identification with white society, Rosemarijn Hoefte, “Free Blacks and Coloureds in Plantation Surinam: The Struggle to Rise,” in *Against the Odds: Free Blacks in the Slave Societies of the Americas*, Edited by Jane Landers, Pgs: 102-129, (Portland: Frank Cass and Company, 1996), 122.

they had, “been striving to do something for ourselves, and consequently have more or less business to close up.”⁵⁴ The lack of separatist support among the elite northern blacks is not proof of the movement’s lack of widespread appeal to the black masses.

Members of the black lower class were more open to considering emigration as a viable option to end racially based injustices. Working class black Baltimoreans who chose to emigrate to Trinidad in the 1840s represented skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers.⁵⁵ Some lower class blacks in the North also held largely agricultural aspirations of owning land and obtaining liberty. L. C. Chambers was preacher in the North, but also a member of the lower class who rationalized becoming an independent land owner. In a letter to the *New York Tribune* Chambers stated

I know from experience that a colored man is more respected as a farmer than as a menial in anybody’s employ. I was once a coachman for a gentleman in Pennsylvania; and although such a position is one of respectability and demands a good man to fill the place, yet I did not feel as independent although a preacher, because my congregation cannot give the support I need.

Chambers, like other members of the black lower class in the South, sought self-sufficiency and independence through land ownership. He goes on to address the potential for cotton cultivation in Africa, where “we can become wealthy, honorable and influential.” Unlike most of his Southern counterparts, however, Chambers also uses explanations advocated more so by elites when proposing African emigration, continuing “We can civilize and Christianize the people of Africa while we are ourselves deriving subsistence from the soil.”⁵⁶ Chambers’ motivations though in some ways similar to the masses of black southerners, are also substantively different, and reflect a discourse of upper class spokespersons concerned with the global implications of racial uplift. In general, however, during the antebellum period elite northern blacks largely did not address the ideological concerns of the southern black masses and could not fathom

⁵⁴ S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 29 December 1851, ACS,LOC.

⁵⁵ Phillips, *Freedom’s Shore*, 218.

⁵⁶ L. C. Chambers, “A Colored Man’s Ideas on African Emancipation,” 26 October 1858, *The New York Tribune*, 6.

advocacy of a radical movement that espoused territorial separatism. However, in both rural and urban areas in the South, blacks, even during the antebellum period, engaged in radical separatist activity.

Cities in the South were not free from discrimination, but were nonetheless centers of free black life. Although banned from high status jobs such as public office and publishing some free blacks were able to find success in other skilled occupations such as barbers, carters, and coachmen. Some occupations open to black varied from city to city based upon local industry and the levels of discrimination. In Richmond, for example, free blacks found work in foundries and mills, in Charleston and Savannah they were banned from being mechanics, in Memphis butchers, and in Georgia masons.⁵⁷ Despite these conditions, a small black middle class was able to develop in the South and through their participation in colonization movements show a remarkably greater tendency towards radicalism than their northern counterparts.

Black economic progress was not confined only to the North or even to urban areas. Most free blacks, like most black and white southerners, lived in rural areas during the antebellum period. They worked as farmhands, laborers, ditch diggers, woodchoppers, turpentine hands, tanners, weavers, laundresses, housekeepers, and seamstresses. A small number of southern free blacks in rural areas were able to make substantial economic gains, yet many literate urban black artisans faced relentless occupational discrimination. While white competition and political power restricted the economic pursuits of some blacks in cities, the few free small black farmers in rural areas experienced greater economic security.⁵⁸

Because of their skills free black artisans had a sense of self worth. As a result they were hopeful of their chances of succeeding abroad, but most free blacks were poor and lived on the

⁵⁷ Berlin, 59-60; Berlin, 219; 229-230, 234-235.

⁵⁸ Berlin, 218, John Hope Franklin, *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790-1860* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina press, 1943), 210; Kinshasa, 18-20.

economic margins of society.⁵⁹ Because many black families comprised both free and enslaved members, free blacks were tied to slaves familiarly and as members of the lower class. These conditions in the South worked to align both slave and poor free blacks as members of the same lower economic class.

Saul Rhea of Blountsville, Tennessee wrote about a family of free blacks who were owned by other members of his family. The family patriarch had managed to buy his freedom for \$400 and that of his wife for \$200. The couple contemplated emigrating to Liberia with their three children, although the husband had several other children who were still enslaved. Some slaves could save enough money and perhaps purchase themselves or a loved one, however, such events were extremely hard earned, requiring years of work with no indemnity from the owner. Purchasing an entire family was almost impossible. Although the man was a poor farmer, Rhea commented on his honesty and industry, and knew of many in the area who could write commendations for him.⁶⁰ Although living in relative isolation to the separatist discourse available to his northern brethren through black newspapers or pamphlets, the farmer's story reveals the ability of southern blacks to express and act upon their separatist feelings in rural environments.

The ideologies of liberty and land continued to underpin the aims of southern black separatists during the antebellum era. For the enslaved it often meant freedom and some sought it by legal means with limited success. The slaves of the late Samuel McCorkle of the Lancaster District of South Carolina petitioned the state assembly in 1845 to be granted their freedom. Although the late owner of Lydia McCorkle and her six children John, Bob, Lund, Isaac, Simpson, and Harriet willed that they be transported to Liberia or a free state in the U.S., South

⁵⁹ Berlins, 56; Berlin, 166.

⁶⁰ Saul Rhea to William McClain, Blountsville, Tennessee, 11 June 1851, ACS, LOC.

Carolina law required a legislative act for all manumission. Milly Gordon, a distant relative of the late Mr. McCorkle believed that Lydia and her children, legally belonged to her, the closest living relative. Even though Lydia had died shortly after Mr. McCorkle, the will's executor continued to work to free the children. In a petition to the assembly he praised their youth, stoutness, and industrious habits. Despite his effort and though Lydia's children were "notoriously the offspring," of the deceased, who claimed them and sought to secure their emancipation, no legislative act was passed and the family remained enslaved.⁶¹

While free blacks did not have to seek legal freedom, they did seek liberty through economic, social, and political rights. In a letter to the ACS that addressed separatist interest in Tuscaloosa, S. Wesley Jones wrote,

I trust my brethren will think of this matter, and arouse themselves, and let national pride be kindled up in their hearts, and go to and make us a great nation of our own, build our own cities and towns, make our own laws, collect our own revenue, command our own vessels, army and navy, elect our own governors and lawmakers, have our own schools and colleges, our own lawyers and doctors, in a word, cease to be "herders of wood and drawers of water," and be men.⁶²

Although living in a slave state and under oppressed social conditions, Jones was nonetheless able to envision a black nation where political, economic, and social independence was specifically achieved through territorial separatism.

Rael has argued that the separatist component of Black Nationalism was supported by only a "vocal minority of African Americans" who were more or less duped by the ACS with propaganda "promising them a place in history," and where they might "redeem Africa by bringing it the benefits of civilization and Christianity."⁶³ Some black separatist did leave for the above listed reasons, but many had more practical motivations. Although only a relatively small

⁶¹ Elisha Blackmon to South Carolina Assembly, November 24, 1845, "Petition of Elisha Blackmon, Samuel McCorkle of Lancaster District died 1839, to House of Representatives, Records of the General. Referred to the committee on Colored Population," South Carolina Department of Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina, in Schweninger, *The Debate Over Southern Slavery*, Vol. I, 192-194.

⁶² S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, 29 December 1851, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in "Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3]," 222-224.

⁶³ Rael, 274-275; Cornelius, 160.

number of blacks actually emigrated during the antebellum colonization movement, support of the movement was much more widespread, especially among the non-vocal masses.

Some northern blacks understood the practical economic motivations of black separatists. In October 1851 over thirty black men signed a resolution of the newly formed Liberian Emigration and Agricultural Association in New York. Lewis H. Putnam, a leader in the group, did not wish to become an emigrant himself, but rather, for those supporting the cause, called for “aid in establishing a character for our people and the promotion of civilization by the introduction of agriculture on an extended scale, and thereby open a field for the reception of all who may require its support.” Putnam’s work concerned funding colonization and was not aimed at emigrant recruitment. He desired for each family of emigrants to be supplied with a farm, tools, and provisions for six months upon arrival in Liberia. Putnam plainly stated that the Association was to in “no manner, be connected with the American Colonization Society,” and would be supported by the black community. This fact however brought little reassurance to New York’s black colonization opponents.

The day following the meeting of the Liberian Emigration and Agricultural Association an anti colonization meeting was also held where attendees advised Putnam to “discontinue associating himself with Negroes of New York, because of association with the American Colonization Society our enemy villifier.” Putnam remained unmoved by the intense disdain for him and the ACS by northern blacks. He vowed to “aid in developing the resources of the country and although we commenced by establish ourselves, yet we are pledged to give equal facilities to others by dividing the means, which have been placed at our disposal.” He also explained how, “Liberia owes her existence to the Colonization Society and although the prejudice against it is a serious drawback to the emigration of those who would otherwise go to

that country, yet our actions must harmonize with it until we can dispense with its aid.”⁶⁴

Although not supporting emigration for themselves or the masses of black people, the group understood the importance among their southern brethren of obtaining a sustainable economic livelihood.

More than ten years earlier, the Bethel A. M. E. Church, in Baltimore chose two delegates, Thomas S. Price and Nathaniel Peck, to investigate emigration to Trinidad or British Guiana. Upon their return Price and Peck did not advocate moving to Trinidad to the congregants because of the island’s lack of employment opportunities for skilled workers. Instead the pair advised emigrating to British Guiana and understood that in its predominately agricultural based economy settlers would require immediate access to land.⁶⁵ Price, Peck and Putnam all acknowledged the need for a practical plan to ensure economic independence for the masses of potential black emigrants to Liberia and all advocated agricultural pursuits as the most viable option. In general however, the way in which northern black leaders presented black separatism did not offer great appeal to the average black southerner.

Northern separatists differed from southern separatists by their prioritization of objectives. Foremost for southern blacks was the practical ideologies of liberty and land ownership, while Northern blacks often referenced cultural ideologies as motivating factors. In the *North Star* one northern black writer contends

There are two aspects under which the Colonization cause may be regarded – first as by confirming the prejudice that black and white men cannot live under the same government in a state of legal equality – that general Emancipation can only be safely attempted on condition of the total expatriation of the black race from this country. That sort of Colonization we decidedly object. But the Colonization from choice of a great number of our emancipated blacks on the soil from which their forefathers were torn by the man-stealer, with a view to the introduction of Christianity and the Useful Arts there, and the closing of the

⁶⁴ “Meetings of the Colored People,” 21 October 1851, *The New York Tribune*, 4.

⁶⁵ Phillips, *Freedom’s Shore*, 215-217; Despite the recommendation of Peck and Price participants supported emigration to Trinidad.

entire coast of Africa against the ravages of the slave-trade – that aspect of Colonization we heartily concur and delight in.⁶⁶

While many black northerners reported racially stereotypical reasons against African colonization such as heathenism and white treachery, southern blacks showed less concern regarding such issues. In letters to the ACS southern blacks rarely cited uncivilized Africans and sinister white intentions as impediments to their participation, whereas these same issues were extremely important to black separatists from the North. Such racially contradictory arguments espousing both African heathenism and heritage or white civilization and prejudice did not characterize southern black separatists who expressed ideas based upon practical motivations of obtaining liberty and land.

The largely subaltern base was not primarily motivated by cultural or providential duties, however, in many instances when trying to earn support southern blacks simply told whites what they wanted to hear. A small number of emigrants used cultural frames with many of their ideas toward Africa centering on it as their homeland. A free colored man in Savannah, for instance, wrote he once viewed colonization as “a matter of temporal interest, but now I view it spiritually.” He wanted to help Liberia and believed he could, “add to the number of advocates for Religion.” Interestingly, he mostly described himself in terms of his industry, “I undertake the branches of a wheelwright, and blacksmith and Carpenter, I also have good idea of Machinery and other branches.”⁶⁷ Although he stated that his motivations were altruistic, he expressed a greater concern for economic and personal gain.

Black separatists echoed their religious merits and the need to uplift Africa in order to appear more accommodating to whites in a hostile political environment. Southern whites

⁶⁶ “African Colonization,” 22 February 1850, *The North Star*, <<http://www.accessible.com/accessible/index.jsp>> (Retrieved February 2010).

⁶⁷ “A Free Negro in Savannah,” Savannah, Georgia, September 1831, “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 1],” 157.

negatively received calls for black emigration based upon abolition, economic independence, or injustice. After the Haitian Revolution black Barbadians advocating colonization in the 1830s referenced civilization and uplift themes as oppose to racial injustice and revolution. Scholar Ifeoma Nwankwo suggests that “within this context of white fear and potential recriminations, of which they were profoundly aware,” black elites had “to decide whether and how to express their connection both to their country of residence and to the world of people of African descent beyond their country.”⁶⁸ Like black elites in Barbados, the black masses in the South also selected arguments that would hopefully decrease oppression and increase support for colonization. Such an emphasis by southern black separatists would have resulted in greater amounts of repression. As a result cultural, philanthropic and religious themes were more widely used in the antebellum period.

Southern black separatists did not openly call for the abolition of slavery. In many cases the subject was avoided altogether when corresponding with officials of the ACS. Northern black supporters, using arguments championing the benefits of increased black morality, on the other hand, directly connected black American success in Liberia, with proof of the potential success of emancipated blacks in the United States. Lewis H. Putnam considered Liberian emigration to be a necessary prerequisite to “terminate the existence of slavery,” declaring “The success in Liberia would clearly indicate all that may be necessary for the moral culture of my people.”⁶⁹ Early black separatist were in no position to express such highly charged issues and did not want to alienate the white supporter upon which they depended. Instead southern black

⁶⁸ Ifeoma Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 7.

⁶⁹ Lewis H. Putnam, *A Review of the Cause and the Tendency of the Issues between the Two Sections of the Country with a Plan to Consolidate the View of the People of the United States in Favor of Emigration to Liberia, as the Initiative to the Efforts to Transform the Present System of Labor in the Southern States into a Free Agricultural Tenantry by the Respective Legislatures, with the Support of Congress to Make It a National Measure* (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Company, Printers, 1859), 17.

separatism, although definitively radical, developed somewhat conservatively, in comparison to Northern philosophies advancing emigration as a predecessor to emancipation.

Cultural and religious calls of uplift were quickly abandoned by black separatists once in Africa. There black separatists began immediately building their own institutions with little constructive attention to the natives.⁷⁰ Though not true in all instances, this prioritizing of black institutional building over the needs of indigenous African supports the idea that in some cases cultural rhetoric was strategically used as way of winning white support. The true motivations of the southern free black lower class proponents of colonization and their slave counterparts were practical concerns aimed at improving their condition.

Separation did not mean defeat. It simply expressed the belief that liberty was to be most readily had outside the United States. Separation was not in and of itself always a second choice. The separation of black and white southern Baptist congregations, for example, was initiated by both groups, although for different reasons. Blacks wanted independence from white authority and whites were angered by the increasing black presence. At times both groups cooperated with one another and blacks were not altogether opposed to working with whites. Still for both parties in most instances separation was preferred.⁷¹ Territorial separation could be seen in the same light.

Although many black southerners may have supported territorial separatism, many factors could inhibit their actual participation in the colonization movement. Historian Erin Burin writes “familial considerations were arguably the preeminent factor in slaves’ decisions concerning emigration.”⁷² Separatist participants mostly emigrated in family and community

⁷⁰ Berlin, 170; Cornelius, 165; Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 183-184.

⁷¹ Cornelius, 36.

⁷² Eric Burin, “If the rest stay, then I will stay; if they go, then I will go,” In *Paths to Freedom: Manumission in the Atlantic World*, edited by Brana-Shute and Sparks, 297.

groups. But unlike those who left after the Civil war, they faced unique challenges. Some slaves opted to stay because of familial reasons.⁷³ Likewise, some free blacks who supported colonization may have opted to stay because some of their family members may have still been enslaved. In numerous cases enslaved families were broken apart by colonization. In Tennessee Sally Thomas' commitment to liberty influenced her decision to encourage her enslaved son, Henry, to escape to the all black settlement of Buxton in Canada West, although she undoubtedly realized the chances of her ever seeing him again after he left were next to none. Thomas' oldest son John was a free black man who lived in Alabama and subscribed to the ACS for three years during the 1850s. Along with emigration to Liberia, John also considered joining his brother in Canada West because of the growing number of discriminatory laws against blacks.⁷⁴ Although distressing, slave families on many occasions departed with family members for the opportunity to live freely and pursue a better life abroad.

Opinions on separatism varied even among family members. Joseph Glowns and his sister were waiting in Savannah for the ship sent by the ACS to take their group of emigrants to Liberia, when the pairs' brother decided not to go. In spite of his decision, the siblings resolved that they would emigrate together and continued to promote the cause. James and Mary Drew of Clarksville, Virginia wanted to emigrate along with several members of their family in 1847. The Drews also had a couple of close friends who also desired to leave. James wrote to the ACS about the larger interest in the movement taking place throughout the community, "There is between 50 and 100 persons around us here, that seems to be very much in favor of emigration to

⁷³ Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 57.

⁷⁴ John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *In Search of the Promised Land: a Black Family and the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 17, 23-34; 127-130.

Liberia, if provided we should after fairly investigating the matter be given favorable account.”⁷⁵

Once the Drews relayed a favorable account back to their community, they believed the other residents who were supporters of the movement would then become actual emigrants.

Often mixed race families also wished to emigrate. Alek, a Tennessee slave, married a black woman with whom he had five children. He also raised a daughter whose mother was a white woman.⁷⁶ Alek wanted all members of his family to emigrate with him to Liberia. James Richardson a white man living in Memphis, Tennessee wrote the ACS on behalf of himself and his biracial wife and children. He did not wish to have any special recognition as a white man in Liberia, simply stating, “My wish is to go to Liberia, as an officer of your Society, not a private competitor with the coloured citizens.”⁷⁷ Richardson was originally born in Scotland and had also lived in the Bahamas, where he inherited a group of slaves. Apparently the role of slave master did not fit Richardson, who after a few years moved to New Orleans, where he met and married a local woman of mixed race.

Richardson worked as a postmaster and then a schoolteacher in Memphis, where he and his wife were raising their two children. He was somewhat content with his situation in Memphis, commenting, “My talents are appreciated, my character is respected, and I am but gently castigated for my transgression against the natural feeling on regard to colour.” However, he felt utterly hopeless about his family’s future in the U.S. He believed that his children would never be able to have respectability or achieve success, because of the current state of race relations in the country. He anticipated an especially grim future for his daughter, Sappho, of

⁷⁵ Joseph Glows to McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 18 March 1851, ACS, LOC; James Drew to Noah Fletcher, Clarksville, Mecklenburg County, 12 August 1847, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 1],” 167.

⁷⁶ Sara Rhea to Gurley, ? Tennessee, 24 May 1833, ACS, LOC;

⁷⁷ James Richardson to Henry Clay, Memphis, Tennessee, 28 April 1832, ACS, LOC; James Richardson to Correspondence Secretary of American Colonization Society, Memphis, Tennessee, 5 May 1832, ACS, LOC; James Richardson, Memphis, Tennessee, 10 May 1832, ACS, LOC; James Richardson to R. R. Gruley, Memphis, Tennessee, 12 May 1832, ACS, LOC.

who he wrote, “already exhibits tokens of bright intellect and great sensiteveneß if she grew up an American, what will be her destiny? Ay, she is “fair” and will be beautiful, no doubt she will be honored – honored, by becoming the harlot of some lowminded purse proud white brute.” Robinson’s story is unique because of the interracial composition of his family, but also reveals the unique interracial character of southern black separatism, whereby cooperation with whites occurred on a regular basis.

Some northern black leader such as James Forten, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen did not support white colonizationists schemes, especially in the years after the abolition movement became more prominent. Other elite separatist leaders such as Mary Shadd Cary, Martin Delany, and James Holly all at some point discouraged emigration to Liberia, because the colony was seen as simply an outgrowth of the ACS. For some blacks, white sponsored colonization movements reeked of anti black sentiment and deportation schemes. These blacks did not support Liberian emigration, but did advocate emigration to countries or areas such as Haiti or Canada West.⁷⁸ Southern black separatists on the other hand never relinquished cooperation with the white colonization movement when attempting to improve their condition.

Southern states had a history of early interracial cooperation, especially during the frontier period. Early churches list both slave and white members as founders. White religious organizations had goals that were similar to those held by southern black separatists. Some white protestant churches supported colonization and the missionary movement in Africa, others such as the Friends Society in North Carolina supported the education of blacks along with abolition and colonization.⁷⁹ Black separatists worked with white colonizationists prior to emigrating and continued to work with them afterwards. In a comparatively more severe racially

⁷⁸ Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation*, 21-23.

⁷⁹ Cornelius, 23-25, 165; Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 40-41.

oppressive climate like the South, black separatists utilized white patrons and organizations in order to more readily obtain their goals.

Blacks often used white patrons to testify to their character and to oversee their endeavors.⁸⁰ Such relationships proved useful in business and religious pursuits, but were also beneficial when blacks pursued a separatist agenda. In 1851 Savannah, Georgia Henry Rosen claimed to be the guardian of John Ballon, a slave born in Africa who had managed to buy his freedom. Rosen praised Ballon as a leading member of the Catholic Church, his occupation as a stevedore and porter, and his general good health. Ballon was free, but chose his guardian, presumably a white man, to introduce him to the ACS before engaging in direct correspondence himself.⁸¹ James Drew first inquired about emigration to Liberia from John Nelson, a local member of the ACS, before writing to the Society himself.⁸² Although he was free and presumably able to write, he quickly made clear in the first lines of his letter that a white member of the ACS had instructed him to do so in order to get further information. This strategy by blacks to seek the assistance of whites probably lessened racial anxiety among both groups; whites' paranoia regarding black activity and blacks' fear of reprisal by whites.

Burrell Mann, a slave living in Richmond, Virginia wanted to be bought by the ACS for so he could emigrate to Liberia. He had no desire to pursue a separatist endeavor on his own. He wrote of his plans to talk to his owner about emigration, but if the Board of Directors "deemed it improper," he would postpone it. Mann felt it necessary to have white patrons speak on his behalf writing, "Sir I am a man that you know not and perhaps you rather I get some

⁸⁰ Kimberly Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans*, (Durham: Duke University, 1997), 79; In Spanish New Orleans free blacks benefited through business, friendship, familial, and/or sexual associations with whites.

⁸¹ Henry Rosen guardian of John Ballon to William McClain, Savannah, Georgia, 21 January 1951, ACS, LOC;

⁸² James Drew, Clarksville, Mecklenburg County, 27 March 1847, Virginia, in "Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 1]," 166.

Gentlemen to write me word and give me information as to who I should get to write for me.”

Ever aware of his environment, Mann also expressed the fears of many black separatists in the South when cooperating with whites. He fretted, “I know many Gentleman that would write for me if it is requested but from being deceived by some in the commencement of my communication to the Society that I know not who to trust.” While Mann’s employer began to treat him more harshly after his decision to emigrate, other white men such as Rev. Edwards of Centenary Church were supportive of his decision.⁸³ Although fearful of white retaliation against his goals, white sponsorship was vital to Mann’s approval by the ACS, and the ACS key to his gaining community approval for separatism in general.

Without the support of whites, the success of black emigration endeavors during the antebellum era was uncertain. Even in Jefferson County, Mississippi, from where numerous emigrants had left for Liberia prior to 1852, colonization was still a controversial issue. Before his death, Hiram Baldwin willed that his slaves be sent to Liberia and their earnings from being hired out used to finance any costs. The Baldwin slaves, however, had no white supporters to speak on their behalf and found that their attempt to achieve independence came to an abrupt end. Although testamentary emancipations were not made entirely illegal until 1857, the Baldwin’s petition for emancipation was nonetheless denied by the probate court.⁸⁴ Lewis H. Putnam also understood this relationship and the critical role whites played in securing black independence. He warned about the dangers of “pressing any plan to change the condition of the colored people, without the co-operation of those whose interest entitles them to all the

⁸³ Burrell Mann Dear Respected Brother, Richmond, Virginia, 1 August 1847, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 1],” 171-172.

⁸⁴ “Petition of Prosper K. Montgomery and John S. Chambliss to the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Mississippi, 1852 in Probate Court Probate Record, Prosper K. Montgomery and John S. Chambliss v. Martha Williamson, William H. Baldwin, George C. Baldwin et al., 251-257, col. E, Jefferson County, Fayette Mississippi,” in Schweninger, *The Southern Debate Over Slavery*. Vol II, 288.

consideration that the nature of the subject demands, it is worthy of an effort to balance the interest on both sides and settle the difference upon a basis favorable to all.”⁸⁵

After emigrating to Liberia ex-slaves often kept in communication with their former masters. Bell Wiley has documented hundreds of letters written from Liberia by manumitted slaves to former masters back in the U.S.⁸⁶ This relationship continued in part because of the former owners’ concern over the emigrants’ well being as well as the emigrants’ interest in maintaining communication for the purposes of support. Judge William Kennedy of Maury County, Tennessee freed twenty-two of his slaves and sent them to Liberia during the 1850s. He continued to show concern for “his people,” as he liked to call them. After his death in 1863, he bequeathed \$1,000 to them to be used for their general support. J. W. S. Frierson, the estate’s executor, continued to communicate with the ex-slaves even after they left and passed along correspondence for them. Frierson noted “they speak for themselves.” Harriet Kennedy was a surviving family matriarch who spoke boldly about her needs and concerns. Regarding the shipping of the groups’ goods and money, Kennedy wrote “I am one of the twenty-two and have five children to take care of and support. We have been informed that if the money sent by way of England and changed it to gold it will cost much, and we shall suffer loss. I therefore prefer that my share whatever it may be sent to me here in Monrovia, or cloth and such things as are suitable for a family.”

Frierson showed special concern for Kennedy and explained to the ACS how she, “was held in high esteem by both her Master and Mistress during their lifetime, and held a post of honor in their household either as waiting maid or cook or both – as she was needed for either purpose.” Frierson also respected her opinion. She complained about a relative of her former

⁸⁵ Putnam, *A Review of the Cause and the Tendency of the Issues between the Two Sections of the Country*, 24.

⁸⁶ Bell Wiley, Editor. *Slaves No More: Letters from Liberia 1833-1869* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1980), vii.

master “Joseph Kennedy now living at home had draw \$400 of this amount which is more than he has any right to and I beseech you to see that he receives no more,” and Frierson attempted to see the situation corrected. He wrote to Secretary McClain about the predicament, “The man Joe, who I think was her nephew of whom she speaks as having \$400 has acquired the bad habit of appropriations to his own use what belonged to others. And I am fearful that in this instance, as in one before, he has availed himself of the benefaction intended for others. If the matter is not beyond your reach I would be glad to know that Harriet has secured her portion.”⁸⁷

White supporters of colonization such as Kennedy and Frierson were not solely concerned with ridding themselves of blacks. They were also concerned with the well-being of emigrants once in Liberia. Undoubtedly holding some racial prejudices, some white southern supporters nevertheless sympathized with the plight of blacks and contributed to the cause of black separatism by their participation in the colonization movement. This strategy of interracial cooperation does not suggest a lack of sophistication on the part of black separatism, rather black separatists strategically participated in the colonization movement in order to achieve their aims in a repressive climate.

Black organizations in the antebellum South also influenced black separatism and support for white colonization movements. During the period the black church was a place to voice racial dissent and solidarity and existed in urban centers and on rural plantations. Whites periodically served as pastors of black churches employing black watchmen to preside when they were not present. Some owners and missionaries also taught their blacks to read so that they

⁸⁷ Joshua Frierson to William McClain and R. R. Gurley, 12 April 1866, Nashville, Tennessee, ACS, LOC; J. W. Frierson to William McClain, 30 July 1867, Columbia, Tennessee, ACS, LOC; Harriet Kennedy to Stevenson Frierson, Monrovia, 28 May 1867, ACS, LOC; Harriet Kennedy to Stevenson Frierson, Monrovia, 7 July 1867, ACS, LOC.

could teach and proselytize to each other.⁸⁸ When whites were not present the black church offered a place for a community discourse on separatism and colonization to take place.

Legislators in cities such as Richmond, Virginia and Charleston, South Carolina, where the black church had a great deal of influence, passed laws requiring white supervision at religious services. In spite of these restrictive laws, independent black churches emerged in southern cities such as Savannah and Augusta, Georgia, Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky, Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina, Nashville, Tennessee, Washington D. C., Norfolk and Petersburg, Virginia, Mobile and Selma, Alabama, New Orleans, Louisiana, and Aberdeen, Natchez, and Vicksburg, Mississippi.⁸⁹

Segregation was preferred in many cases by both blacks and whites. In segregated churches black pastors could openly talk with their congregations about separatism and engage in an oral discourse on Black Nationalist ideas. In New York over forty churches pledged to support the ACS. In Brooklyn and Rochester pastors gave sermons in support of the movement and took up collections.⁹⁰ By using the black church as a venue to discuss separatism, spokespersons could access a large black audience and could gain greater support or opposition. Separatist leaders often utilized the church as a public forum for discussion. In Savannah, E. Hall wrote to the ACS, “I have inform those that wants to go out as you inform me to do and it was given out in the Colord Churches and they must right you as soon as possible.”⁹¹ Black churches in the antebellum South were cauldrons for many forms of black protest including separatism.

⁸⁸ Tyler-McGraw, 15-16; Cornelius, 4-22.

⁸⁹ Cornelius, 115-123; Cornelius, 107-109.

⁹⁰ “The Colonization Cause,” 13 July 1849, *The North Star* <<http://www.accessible.com/accessible/index.jsp>> (Retrieved February 2010).

⁹¹ E. Hall to M. C. Lane, Savannah, Georgia, 13 January 1851, ACS, LOC.

Many times black separatist leadership emerged from leadership positions in the black church. Southern whites were not overwhelmingly opposed to the development of black Christian organization. The Southern Baptist Convention believed black people had a right to a religious education. In various protestant denominations white leadership licensed black preachers, who in turn appointed others within the church to leadership positions such as teachers and deacons. Ministers were especially attracted to Liberian emigration, because of the possibility of missionary work, but also appreciated the practical advantages associated with liberty. In addition to emigrating with their families, during the 1850s some pastors emigrated with numerous members of their congregations. In other cases, congregations purchased the freedom of their pastors in order to perform missionary work in Liberia.⁹² As is the case of many black social movements, the role of the black church was also indispensable in the black separatist cause.

Black leadership is largely derived through a combination of charismatic and traditional authority through the black church.⁹³ The rule is also true of black separatist leadership. Cyrus Chin was a free Negro living in Winchester, Tennessee and was also a Methodist preacher. With the help of the ACS the Franklin County Auxiliary Colonization Society raised one hundred and sixty dollars to transport him, his wife, and their six children to Liberia. The secretary of the Franklin County Auxiliary Colonization Society commented that all of the potential emigrants were “more or less educated,” and that Cyrus would be a “great advantage to the inhabitants of Liberia.” He went on to extol Chin’s industriousness and how he, along with at least one of his

⁹² Cornelius, 27-29; Cornelius, 163-164.

⁹³ Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* Translated by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1958), 78-80, Weber classifies legal rational leaders as those who gain their authority through institutional appointment and are subject to a code of conduct while holding a position. Traditional leaders receive their authority from social custom, while the charismatic leader’s authority is derived from the exceptional character of the individual; Aldon Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: First Free Press, 1984), 7-8.

daughters, read particularly well. The Franklin society adhered to the idea that blacks were capable of living freely and self-governance, and praised the industrious qualities of its black participants. Members of the body were comparatively liberal and openly expressed their were “anxious to see the cause of freedom and equality prosper.”⁹⁴ Chin’s accomplishments were lauded by the society, whose choice to send him to Liberia reveals the high esteem in which black ministers were held in both white and black circles. However, by choosing Chin as a potential emigrant, the society also aimed at controlling, to a degree, the anticipated trajectory of black separatism steering it away from universal liberty, access, and radicalism toward a more selective religious, imperialist, and accommodating stance.

The ACS welcomed black ministers, especially, because they could further the organization’s evangelical goals in Africa. It is unknown whether Chin continued to minister in Liberia, but the fact that he and his entire family were able to emigrate, points to his influence and ability to pursue his own aims within the Franklin Colonization Society’s more altruistic colonization agenda.

White colonization agents acted as formal leaders during the final phases of mobilization by greeting groups of potential emigrants, corresponding with the ACS, and helping with the various ordeals involved with preparing to leave.⁹⁵ Although spending a significant amount of time with them, slaves listened with suspicion to the reports of ACS agents and their owners. White agents did not interact intimately with black participants and rarely visited black homes, churches or clubs. They primarily spoke with other whites through government agencies,

⁹⁴ Stephen Adams, Winchester, Tennessee, 23 August 1831, ACS, LOC.

⁹⁵ Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 18; Formal leaders are those with titled positions within a primary social movement organization and who are recognized nationally.

philanthropic and benevolent societies.⁹⁶ Some white supporters were apprehensive about taking on formal leadership duties in the colonization movement. Potential emigrant, John Broughton, wrote to the ACS regarding his meeting with one potential white agent, Mr. Mallow “he informed me you wished him to act as an agent but he fear to take an active part in the matter.”⁹⁷ White agents acted as formal leaders, but did not engage in the grassroots mobilization of supporters.

Formal leaders also came from the ranks of the black elite. Some elite black separatists such as Martin Delany and Alexander Crummell traveled throughout the U.S. speaking to both white and black audiences. Like the white agents of colonization societies, however, these national spokespersons did not usually engage in the face to face interactions necessary for participant mobilization. Although free status was not a requisite of leadership, slaves rarely communicated with white agents or actively recruited others into the movement.⁹⁸ The precarious nature of their existence did not allow for such obstinate signs of authority or independence.

Formal leaders are only part of the equation for successful mobilization. Much of it is owed to bridge leaders or grassroots leaders who directly recruit participants.⁹⁹ Blacks were excluded from the highest ranks of leadership within the colonization movement both before and after the Civil War. Those black separatists who worked within the colonization movement were most commonly bridge leaders and came from the ranks of lower black classes. Bridge leaders

⁹⁶ Brown, “Free Blacks’ Rhetorical Impact on African Colonization,” 262-3; Burin, “If the rest stay, then I will stay,” 294.

⁹⁷ John Broughton, 17 February 1851, ACS, LOC.

⁹⁸ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 166-167.

⁹⁹ Robnett, *How Long? How Long?* 20; Bridge leaders come about through policies of social exclusion, are active before an organization is formalized, operate in the free spaces, utilize direct contact leadership for mobilization and recruitment, closely tied to the ideas of their constituency, tend to advocate more radical tactics and strategies, have greater mobility in non-hierarchical based organizations, and may act as formal leaders during times of crisis as well as hold a formal leadership position within a social movement organization.

connected formal leadership to the masses by engaging in the consuming tasks of movement recruitment. By interacting directly with potential recruits bridge leaders reassured the masses of black separatists by calming their fears, answering their questions, and offering advice. In 1847, Jacob Anderson of Alabama wrote to ACS Secretary McClain on behalf of nine new subscribers to the *African Repository*. The following year, Anderson was “Requested by a family of free people,” to investigate emigrating to Liberia. A few months later Anderson wrote McClain regarding a slave named Jack Georg. Georg was in the process of buying himself from his owner for \$600, in order to emigrate to Liberia. Georg had already collected \$300 towards his purchase and Anderson wrote the ACS in an attempt to receive a loan to pay the remaining cost. Anderson attempted to negotiate a repayment plan with the ACS whereby George would be advanced \$300 which he would then repay once in Liberia.¹⁰⁰ As a bridge leader Anderson relayed the concerns and needs of this black participant to white colonization leaders. Although possessing limited resources, he became a leader not through appointment, but by his ongoing activity within the colonization and separatist movement.

S. Wesley Jones also functioned as a bridge leader in Alabama and spread information about separatism for over a decade. He traveled to North Alabama to talk with others about leaving. While visiting the area, he met with like-minded black supporters near Huntsville, who were interested in colonization.¹⁰¹ He calmed the fears of separatist supporters writing,

There is Some 25 in this vicinity of Tuscaloosa with who I have conversed on the subject of Emigration to Liberia that manifest much anxiety to leave here as soon as possible & I am Sorry to Say that there is as many more who listen to the well invented Tales of the Enemies of Coln and Refuse to Emigrate Until Some one have the Effect to Remove their foolish Prejudices.

¹⁰⁰ Jacob Anderson to William McClain, 16 February 1847, Mobile, Alabama, ACS, LOC; Jacob Anderson to William McClain, 20 May 1848, Mobile, Alabama, ACS, LOC; Jacob Anderson to William McClain, 29 October 1848, Mobile, Alabama, ACS, LOC.

¹⁰¹ S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 12 June 1848, in “Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” 216-217; S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, Huntsville, Alabama, 18 April 1852, in Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 3],” 224-225.

Jones also engaged in the routine business of leadership, communicating with colonization agents and black supporters,

there is some information also I wish to obtain from you Both for myself & for my friends who wish to go to Liberia. Do they society pay the Expenses of those who are unable to pay he society pay the Expenses of those who are unable to pay from the place of their Residence to the Place of Embarkation and are they allowed to carry their Beds and Bed Clothes these Questions are frequently asked me and I am not able to give satisfactory information.¹⁰²

The black bridge leaders of the colonization movement came from the black lower classes.

Leaders continued to work during the antebellum period before finally being able to act independently after the Civil War.

During the antebellum period black separatists in the South survived extreme repression by participating with the ACS in the colonization movement. Slaves and free blacks navigated the southern political structure in order to achieve broad aims of both land and liberty. But, because of repression in the South, black separatism remained in a state of abeyance during the prewar period. Black separatists and white colonizationists possessed different motivations for participation, but often were pushed to act collectively by the same events. Because of the restrictions placed upon blacks organizing in the South, often the only option for black separatists was to participate in the colonization movement. Because of discrimination, southern blacks developed and rationalized unique strategies to maximize support among whites by downplaying more radical ideological emphases in favor of more accommodating ones. Such methods should not negate the important contribution of black separatists in the antebellum South. Despite the inability to form independent social movement organizations, the early structural characteristics of black separatism became more developed during the antebellum period and would greatly influence the nature of the grassroots separatist movements reaching fruition after the Civil War during the zenith of Black Nationalism in the South.

¹⁰² S. Wesley Jones to McClain, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 4 August 1849, in Letters to the American Colonization Society [Part 1],” 220-221.

CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF POST CIVIL WAR MOVEMENTS

At the 1880 Senate hearings investigating the large number of blacks from the South moving to the Midwest, commonly called the Exoduster Movement, O. S. B. Wall, a black attorney from Washington D. C. and President of the National Emigration Aid Society, was questioned by Senator Blair of New Hampshire. Senator Blair asked, “Now, then will you please state the philosophy of the Exodus.”¹ Wall, replied:

This would be my theory. Just after the war our people were in good condition. We got along for several years very well until there were several failures in the law or failure to support the enforcement act properly, when the men who had been in rebellion came into power in those states, and they, as seemed to be natural with them, took control of their state governments which they had not had under the control of the carpetbag governments, and then things relapsed pretty much into their old conditions, and since then the pressure goes on as all other oppressions do until we have got into a state of things so dark and oppressive that there must be some ventilation. There must be something to make us free again. In order to do this and better our condition, I believe the exodus began. It was a spontaneous movement, and if anybody had any agency in it, it was our Heavenly Father the great Creator of us all.²

Wall’s statement, speaking to the general nature of movements throughout the South, is an accurate account of the social conditions influencing the emergence of emigration movements. He recognized that various forms of oppression were the driving impetus behind the hundreds of movements taking place across the South. However, rather than movements occurring spontaneously as Wall suggests, lower class blacks in the South founded emigration organizations in response to local oppression. Any analysis of movement emergence must

¹ United States, Congress, Senate, Select Committee to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of the Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States, *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States* 46th Congress, 2nd session, 1879-1880 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 45.

² *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States* 46th Congress, 2nd session, 1879-1880 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 45.

examine how political, social, and economic conditions influenced supporters' decisions to leave. Separatists did consider national events while pondering whether to participate in a given movement; however, it was the local impact of national events that ultimately influenced their decision to emigrate to another country or region. The post Civil War period represents the zenith of black separatism in the South, a time when ex slaves and poor blacks who had been free before the war, had the power and opportunity to act on their desires for land ownership and self-determination.

Numerous studies have examined the emergence of post war black separatist movements.³ While these studies have informed readers about regional movements and/or movements occurring during a particular period, several shortcomings exist. Scholars Nell Irving Painter and Edwin Redkey are reluctant to examine emigration and migration movements as a single form of resistance, rather treating each as a distinct response to oppression. Kenneth Barnes and Claude Clegg have examined the ways rural blacks worked with the ACS, but have only studied movements occurring within a state and/or during a particular period of increased movement activity. A monograph comparing the developmental patterns of multiple movements over time and space has yet to be completed. While very informative, these works do not allow readers to record patterns and consistencies within emigration movements. Consequently, the characteristics in one case study have been widely assumed to mirror the characteristics of movements throughout the South.

³ Kenneth C. Barnes, *The Journey of Hope: the Back-to-Africa Movement in Arkansas in the late 1800s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Claude Andrew Clegg, *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Kenneth Marvin Hamilton, *Black Towns and Profit: Promotion and Development in the Trans-Appalachian West 1877-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991); Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); Edwin Redkey, *Black Exodus: Black Nationalist and Back-to-Africa Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).

Some historians do not explore the complex reasons affecting decisions to leave and, at best, see participants as irrational and unorganized. Jack Bryan places the 1879 Exoduster Movement outside of the larger separatist trends of the black lower class in the South, and viewed it as, “not an organized colonization effort,” but rather driven by escapism and, “the naiveté of its participants.”⁴ Robert Athearn assumes participants had no practical motivation when advocating separatism, writing, “As a rule, the run-of-the-mill field hand who was queried along the way to the Promised Land was vague about reasons for his departure” and posits that “Bad luck, poor management, laziness, drought, pestilence, or just a normal desire to migrate to a fresh part of the country,” were all reasonable motivations.⁵ Contrary to these arguments, lower class black southerners rationalized emigration as the most promising endeavor for advancement. They responded to racial injustice by either pursuing political avenues to redress grievances or by supporting separatism and removal from the South.⁶ Their decision to emigrate to protest their treatment should be viewed as a viable form of political advocacy.

The contribution of southern black emigrants to Black Nationalism should not be underestimated because of their cooperation with the organizations or governments that were at times racially biased. Their efforts should not be assumed to originate with, be the result of, or be totally controlled by the ACS or the U. S. government. Southern blacks though working under the direction of these institutions and possessing limited authority were nevertheless able to exercise their separatist agenda.

⁴ Jack M. Bryan, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri, 2008), 28, 95.

⁵ Robert G. Athearn, *In Search of Canaan: Black Migration to Kansas, 1879-1880* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978), 241.

⁶ Omar Ali, *In the Balance of Power: Independent Black Politics and Third-Party Movements in the United States* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008), 68-69.

These achievements were possible, because of the tradition of black organizing and protest in the South during the Revolutionary Era and the antebellum period. Doug McAdam offers a thorough study of the political opportunities after World War II and the community resources such as the black church which helped to facilitate black collective action during the Civil Rights Movement.⁷ Steven Hahn loosely applies this theoretical model in his study of political organizing during the Civil War and Reconstruction by lower class blacks in the South.⁸ Hahn and McAdam are correct in stating that the prior existence of communal institutions such as the black church or mutual aid societies is vital to any type of successful collective action by southern blacks. But while Hahn offers an excellent analysis of postwar emigration movements among rural southern black populations, he, like McAdam, sees no decisive event immediately preceding either emigration during a separatist movement or collective protest during the Civil Rights Movement respectively. Although accounting for the structural conditions necessary for movement emergence, these studies do not answer why action is taken when it is.

This chapter will correct these oversights and by using county level data will ask how spatial process and grievance theories can account for movement emergence with respect to place and time.⁹ Emigration movements are triggered when abrupt changes in economic or political conditions are coupled with violence. Vigilante groups such as the Ku Klux Klan sought to violently restore the South to conditions before the Civil War, including the ultimate

⁷ Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 39-40; Political process model emphasizes the socio-political context affecting movement participants and the collective resources utilized.

⁸ Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003), 336.

⁹ David Snow, Daniel M. Cress, Liam Downey, and Andrew Jones, "Disrupting the Quotidian: Reconceptualizing the Connection between Breakdown and the Emergence of Collective Action," *Mobilization* 3 (1998): 1-22, 2, Researchers use grievance theory to surmise how acute disturbances in everyday life facilitate collective action; E. M. Beck, Glenn Deane, and Steward E. Tolnay, "Incorporating Space into Social Histories: How Spatial Process Operate and How We Observe Them," *International Review of Social History* 43 Supplement 6 (1998): 57-80, 57-58, Researchers observe instances of spatial dependence, in which a social movement in one locale is causally linked to a movement in another locale.

destruction of all black political and economic power.¹⁰ Movements were initiated after such marked increases in violent oppression following a sharp decline in economic or political gains. As conditions for blacks worsened in the South, so too did support for separatism. In both cases, whenever separatists decided to relocate, violence was the immediate catalyst.

Similar to the emergence of colonization movements during the antebellum period, the emergence of emigration movements during the postwar period are also affected by location. Social movement researchers E. M. Beck, Glenn Dean and Stewart Tolnay use spatial processes theory to detail how collective action in one location can causally affect action in another and show through their investigation of southern lynching movements how movement emergence in one area can have a positive or negative effect on the emergence of movements in other areas.¹¹ In southern black emigration movements, emergence in one area increased the likelihood of movements emerging in others. When blacks in one county suffered a significant disruption and began to advocate separatism, often black residents in nearby counties adopted a similar radical strategy. This positive spatial pattern accounts, in part, for the trend whereby several local movements occur over a short period of years in a given region. In other cases, movements in one region were dependent upon one another, with one movement spilling over and stimulating participation by residents from nearby counties. This type of occurrence accounts for participants in one county and from neighboring counties leaving at the same time. When considering the proximity of separatist movements to one another and the violence

¹⁰ Redkey, *Black Exodus: Black Nationalist and back-to-Africa Movement*, 14; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 426.

¹¹ M. Beck, Glenn Deane, and Stewart E. Tolnay, "Vicarious Violence: Spatial Effects on Southern Lynchings, 1890-1919," *The American Journal of Sociology* 102 no. 3 (November 1996): 788-813, 792-795, Researchers find that positive spatial patterns occur when a movement in one locale facilitates the emergence of a movement in another locale; negative spatial patterns occur when a movement in one locale impedes the emergence of a movement in another locale.

accompanying detrimental changes in economic or political structures, one can begin to make a reasonable assessment of why movements emerged when and where they did.

Also similar to the antebellum period, spatial processes and the diffusion of information also account in part for movements in one locale occurring consecutively at different times. When a particular county underwent a series of migrations spanning several years, often a small group was sent to a destination spot in order to survey a region before the entire emigration party followed, with friends and family often left waiting to hear a positive review from these initial emigrants before planning a large scale expedition. Likewise, in the years shortly after a large migration, a smaller group of emigrants or even a sole individual may decide to emigrate.

In the view of Frederick Douglass, the cause of the black southern emigration was primarily harassment by whites and he insisted that blacks would only abandon their beloved homes under extreme pressure.¹² This view could not be more accurate. In general, blacks throughout the South shared national and regional experiences of political, social, and economic oppression. However, black separatists were motivated by acute changes in local political and economic opportunities or repression. These types of disruptions in everyday life served to undermine the livelihoods of blacks living in the South and further contributed to the barriers hindering their advancement. These conditions combined influenced the decision of lower class blacks ultimately to advocate territorial separatism as a viable solution to ending racially based injustices.

This chapter examines separatist movements by theme and uses a state by state level comparison. However, this type of construction does not mean to imply that political, economic, violence and spatial causes for movement emergence occurred exclusively by state. All three

¹² Frederick Douglass, "The Negro Exodus from the Gulf States," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 9 (January 1880): 39-48, 42-43.

conditions could motivate blacks within a state to become separatists. Rather, this chapter's construction is used to highlight the most striking causes of separatist participation within a state and does not intend to exclude the existence of alternative motivations in any smaller subsequent or prior movements.

In many ways, Tennessee is an excellent case study for investigating the emergence of black separatism throughout the South. From 1866 to 1879, some black Tennesseans advocated separatism when either strained political or economic conditions worsened by increases in racial violence. During this period, blacks from all geographical regions of the state participated in emigration movements to Liberia or the Midwest.

Black separatists in Tennessee began to coordinate emigration movements almost immediately after the Civil War. Tennessee had an extensive colonization record before the War with both white private and public support given for separatism. In the 1820s reformist Francis Wright started the Nashoba community in West Tennessee to encourage slave owners to manumit their slaves by providing a temporary arrangement where slaves would receive training and work in the colony to purchase their freedom before emigrating outside of the United States. In the wake of Nat Turner's Rebellion more Tennesseans began to support for colonization during the 1830s and the state legislature appropriated funds to the Tennessee Colonization Society in order to help with the expenses incurred from transporting emigrants to Liberia. By 1865, emigration had gained support from the Republican government with several politicians giving speeches in the state legislature in favor of black emigration. Emigration was also openly discussed among black representatives during the State Convention of Colored Men in 1866.¹³

¹³ Jane and William H. Pease, *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963), 25-44; Caitlin A. Fitz, "The Tennessee Anti-Slavery Movement and the Market Revolution, 1815-1835," *Civil War History* 52 no. 1 (March 2006): 5-40, 18-21; Alrutheus A. Taylor, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Pub., 1941), 106-107.

In that same year in the Williamson County Courts, ex-slaves fought with relatives of their former master for the \$25,000 he had set aside for their emigration to Liberia after his death.¹⁴

During the 1860s blacks living in Tennessee supported emigration movements as political conditions became increasingly unstable. Rival conservative and radical political factions made life precarious for many black Tennesseans after the Civil War. In 1867 Tennessee became the first state in the South to grant universal male suffrage, however, these rights were not whole heartedly respected. After 1869 and the return of a Democratic majority to the General Assembly, legislators eliminated provisions for the equal education of blacks and whites, replacing it with a segregated system in which county governments were empowered to institute public schools or not. In the following years poll taxes were implemented followed by other measures to curtail black political power such as literacy tests and open ballots.

Political changes that had enfranchised freedmen and disenfranchised ex-Confederates also caused tension to arise throughout the state. The lack of a military occupation coupled with political turmoil in the state also facilitated racial violence against blacks. In the late 1860s, black support for separatism increased in the state as more and more blacks became the victims of violence prompted by political rivalries.

During the years 1867-1869, some whites were motivated to intimidate would-be black Republican voters in middle Tennessee by the fear of Radical Republican control in the state.¹⁵ Blacks first gave reports to government officials about the Ku Klux Klan in the state during this period. These conditions certainly influenced black residents in Stewart and Davidson counties in middle Tennessee to participate in emigration movements to Liberia in 1867. Rural areas like Dover in Stewart County were particularly as one historian states “at the mercy of white terror,”

¹⁴ John Seys to William McClain, Nashville, Tennessee, 7 February 1866, ACS, LOC.

¹⁵ Paul D. Phillips, “A History of the Freedmen’s Bureau in Tennessee” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1964), 267-325.

during this period when whites viewed black schools, churches, and political organizations as challenging the dominant social order.¹⁶ The Freedmen's Bureau records from Montgomery County are a good indication of the local conditions affecting neighboring Stewart County. The year before Stewart County blacks emigrated in 1867, black residents in Montgomery County were the targets of numerous incidents of violence. A white man named Avant beat a black man named Miles Carter in September 1866 and in December Elisha Stanley, Tobe Ring, and other white men burned down Solomon Adams' house down. Although the defendants were given a trial, the court acquitted all of them. Fleming Crump, a Dover resident and a local separatist leader, read and distributed tracts of the *African Repository* around the area. Before emigrating to Liberia in 1867, he wrote that the blacks there were, "oppressed" and in a "needy condition."¹⁷

Violence against blacks also occurred in Davidson County where emigration movements took place in 1867 and 1868. W. C. Owens killed Michael May, a local black man in April, yet no arrest was made. In October 1867, unknown assailants killed James Drake and wounded his wife Eliza. Freedmen's Bureau reports note that two white men from the Crockett family were questioned, but had believable alibis and hence nothing more was done. Within the next two years, nearly twenty blacks left the county for Liberia.¹⁸ From 1867-1869, 76 blacks in Middle Tennessee participated in three emigration movements to Liberia. (See Table 19 and Figure 19) The combination of abrupt political changes and violence in the state made life unbearable for some blacks, inducing them to advocate separatism.

¹⁶ Stephen A. Ash, *Middle Tennessee Society Transformed, 1860-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 204-205.

¹⁷ Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Tennessee Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1869, Outrages, National Archives and Records Administration; Fleming Crump to William Coppinger, Dover, Tennessee, 23 September 1876, ACS, LOC.

¹⁸ Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Tennessee Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1869, Outrages, NARA.

Table 19. Emigration Expeditions from Tennessee to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1866	144	Knoxville	Knox
1867	7	Philadelphia	Loudon
1867	58	Dover	Stewart
1868	8	Nashville	Davidson
1869	9	Nashville	Davidson
1869	10	Philadelphia	Loudon
1869	3	Mason	Tipton
1873	39	Strawberry Plains	Jefferson
1874	2	Cypress Inn	Wayne
1880	1	Nashville	Davidson
1893	1		
1901	1	Nashville	Davidson

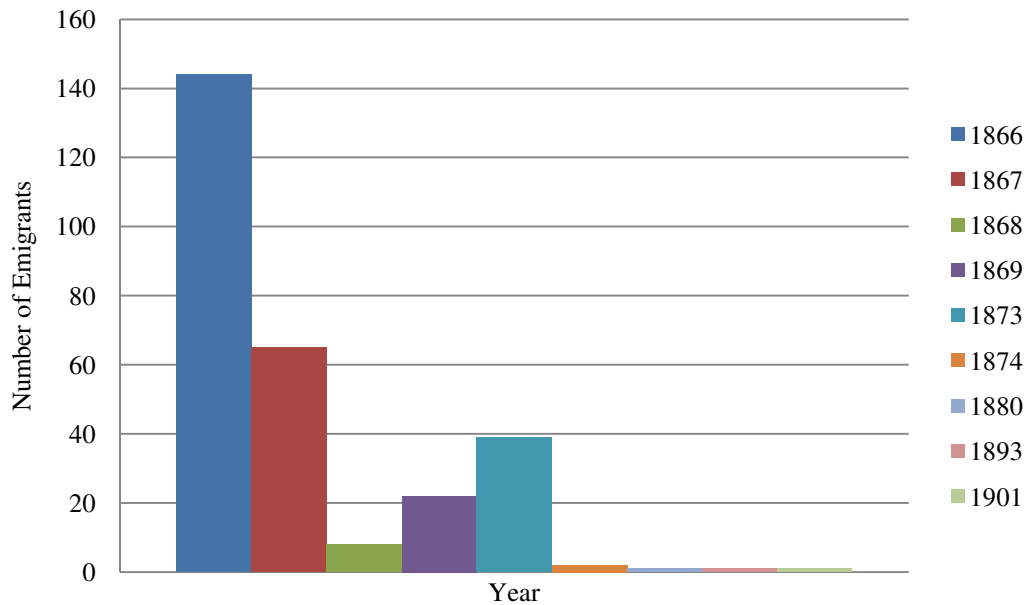


Figure 19. Emigration Expeditions from Tennessee to Liberia

The majority of black emigrants to Liberia left the state during this early period of political turmoil. After 1869 and the end of Republican Reconstruction in the state, the number of emigration movements to Liberia dramatically decreased in Tennessee as violence against blacks waned. Republican power had also greatly decreased and Bourbon Democrats regained majority control of the state legislature. Although disenfranchisement laws such as poll taxes and literacy tests largely prevented rural blacks from voting, blacks in urban areas influenced municipal governments throughout the late nineteenth century. During the relative political calm after 1869, blacks participated in smaller emigration movements to Liberia, but these excursions often involved only a single individual or family. Not until the mid 1870s was interest in separatism reignited among lower class blacks in the state.

The Exoduster Movement to Kansas in 1879 began during the tumultuous period following the Compromise of 1877 and the withdrawal of federal forces from the South. The local impact of this national event was not as dramatic politically in Tennessee as in other southern states. The state had not been under a military occupation since 1869, thus the removal of federal troops from the South was not followed by a sudden onslaught of violence or political usurpation in Tennessee. Rather than being motivated by the desire for increased political rights, blacks emigrating from the state during the 1870s were primarily motivated by economic considerations.

Black Exodusters began leaving in the late 1860s. In the mid-1870s, under the leadership of Pap Singleton and the organization of the Edgefield Real Estate Association, black Tennesseans began emigrating in ever increasing numbers mainly because of economic concerns. Nashville was the site of yet another emigration convention in 1879. Although many attendees stated frustrations over the legal hindrance to black political and civil rights, most emigrants voiced economic motivations as their reason for leaving the state.¹⁹ Singleton's foremost concerns were not political, but focused instead on securing an economic livelihood, specifically in the form of available land for farming. He told a reporter that in Tennessee, "the whites had the lands and the sense, and de blacks had nothing but their freedom." Singleton believed that blacks "ought to be trying to get homes of their own, lands of their own, instead of depending on renting from their former masters or subsisting."²⁰

The local economic impact of the Crisis of 1873 probably was a greater motivating factor for participants of the Exoduster movement in Tennessee than political rights. The Colored People Cooperative Land and Emigrant Association in Clarksville asked the Governor of

¹⁹ Walter L. Fleming, "Pap Singleton, the Moses of the Colored Exodus," *The American Journal of Sociology* 15 (July 1909):61-82.

²⁰ "The Origin of the Exodus," *The Chicago Tribune* p.38, Negro Exodus Papers, Kansas State Historical Society.

Kansas, John St. John, about the work demands in the state and lamented that although there were many people in the area who wanted to emigrate, most “had neither means,” to do so.²¹ Singleton’s arguments and those of other lower class blacks indicate that, unlike the Liberian emigrants in the 1860s, the 1870s Tennessee separatists, particularly the Exodusters, were predominantly motivated to emigrate because of the want for economic stability.

As possibility for black economic mobility decreased during the mid-1870s racial tensions simultaneously began to increase. During this period violence also began to increase again in the state, providing the catalyst for participation in emigration movements to all black towns. J. H. Burrus, the Davidson County Secretary and Treasurer, wrote Governor St. John about the great number of, “intelligent and colored men who have by industry and economy accumulated property.” He stated how blacks in Davidson County wanted to know about the laws and the state constitution of Kansas and complained that in Tennessee their children would be reared in an “unchristian” and “unreasonable” environment.²² The abrupt strain in economic conditions and racial tensions after the 1873 recession coincided with the rise in movement participation in the mid 1870s and pushed many black Tennesseans toward separatism.

The close spatial proximity of middle Tennessee movements to one another indicates that a emigration movement in one location had a positive effect on influencing movement emergence in nearby areas. The diffusion of the 1866 Knoxville separatist movement into neighboring counties that were experiencing similar disturbing local conditions is an excellent example of the positive influence that close physical proximity to a movement can have on inspiring movement emergence in a nearby locale. In all, from 1867-1873, movement emergence in Knox County positively affected those counties in its immediate vicinity and

²¹ A. Aray to Governor John St. John, Clarksville, Tennessee, 25 June 1879, NEP, KSHS.

²² Taylor, *The Negro in Tennessee, - 1865-1880*, 112-114; J. H. Burrus to Governor John St. John, Nashville, Tennessee, 25 September 1879, NEP, KSHS.

facilitated the participation of two hundred blacks from East Tennessee in three area emigration movements to Liberia.

Some apprehensive supporters in Tennessee were transformed into movement participants by first-hand accounts of the movement. When Hopkins W. Erskine arrived in Knoxville from Liberia in 1866, he quickly began recruiting local blacks for an emigration movement to Liberia. He had traveled to areas surrounding Knoxville in Tennessee and Georgia. After he left the area, he believed that “several men who purpose to go out in the spring expedition, who will start a good influence over others in Knoxville.” In September, Erskine forwarded the names of over two hundred participants from New Market, Jefferson County, with more expected to come in from the town of Dandridge and Strawberry Plains. In the end, Erskine had personally helped to recruit over 140 Knoxville black emigrants from the state.²³

In the years following the Knoxville movement, smaller immigration movements to Liberia began to spring up in the neighboring counties of Jefferson and Loudon. Erskine correctly predicted that after the 1866 Knoxville emigrants left, “that many of their friends will join them soon.” James Nelson, a school teacher in the town of Philadelphia in Loudon County, thought he could recruit about 50 people for a movement in 1867. Although the granting of local political rights such as jury selection and public office holding enticed some black residents to remain in the state, Nelson plainly stated that these events had “not changed my purpose,” and that, “God sparring my life I shall go and induce as many others to do the same as I.”²⁴

The emergence of emigration movements in Tennessee demonstrates that space and time are critical components of any analysis. The state experienced both volatile economic and

²³ H. W. Erskine to William Coppinger, Knoxville, Tennessee, 22 September 1866, ACS, LOC; H. W. Erskine to William Coppinger, Knoxville, Tennessee, 24 September 1868, ACS, LOC; Samuel McMillan to William Coppinger, Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, 10 September 1866, ACS, LOC.

²⁴ James Nelson to Secretary William Coppinger, Philadelphia, Tennessee, 20 July 1867, ACS, LOC; H. W. Erskine, “Arrival Out of the Golconda,” *The African Repository* 43 no. 9 (September 1867): 283.

political conditions followed by episodes of racial violence, during which lower class black Tennesseans came to advocate separatism. This characteristic makes it an excellent case study to investigate grassroots separatism throughout the South. Likewise, the close spatial proximity of Tennessee's movements to one another are also good representations of the general cluster pattern in the South whereby an emigration movement diffuses into nearby areas and positively effects movement emergence. Other southern states generally support this model.

Political repression led to the emigration of thousands of blacks from the South. During the period of Southern Redemption, as white Democrats regained political dominance, black political rights were systematically eroded. Although Democrats voiced the New Departure strategy, which called upon a coalition of whites and blacks based upon shared economic interests, the party actually remained committed to white supremacy and labor control. Once in office, Democratic legislatures quickly abandoned principles championing unity and black civil liberties.²⁵

If unity rhetoric was not an effective enough in recruiting black Democratic voters, some whites welcomed violence as a means of reinstituting their political and racial dominance. During the years 1868 – 1871 as several southern states underwent redemption, the South also witnessed unprecedented levels of vigilante violence. These groups often targeted any prominent black local leader, whether they were office holders or not. Ordinary black men who were brave enough to vote the Republican ticket were also susceptible to attack.²⁶ It was within this climate of violence and political repression that black Southerners throughout various parts of the South contemplated separatism as a viable remedy to their continued subjugation.

²⁵ Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution*, 421-422.

²⁶ Foner, 425-426.

Kenneth Barnes asserts that local conditions in Arkansas brought about the emergence of emigration movements throughout the state.²⁷ Arkansas blacks had exercised some degree of political power in the years immediately following the Civil War. However, the state government gradually dismantled these political rights in the 1870s. Barnes finds that economic frustrations coupled with political conflicts spawned a series of emigration movements that were first initiated in west central Arkansas. During the years 1879-1880, nearly 150 members of the Liberian Exodus Arkansas Colony emigrated to Liberia under the leadership of Anthony L. Stanford, a local preacher and politician. Other black Arkansans who participated in the movement during this period were similarly motivated by repressive local conditions.

By the 1880s the amount of political intimidation in the state had diminished and emigration movements decreased as the fears of black residents were calmed. But the 1880s witnessed also a period of severe droughts and weather conditions, which curtailed agricultural growth and production.²⁸ For these economic reasons, Barnes finds that emigration during this decade “ebbed and flowed,” illustrated by the smaller number of blacks leaving for Liberia. (See Table 13 and Figure 13)

²⁷ Kenneth C. Barnes, *Journey of Hope, The Back-To-Africa Movement in Arkansas in the Late 1800s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 14-21.

²⁸ Barnes, *Journey of Hope, The Back-to-Africa Movement in Arkansas in the late 1800s*, 31-33.

Table 13. Emigration Expeditions from Arkansas to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1879	4	North Creek	Phillips
1879	15	Popular Grove Phillips	Phillips
1880	108	County	Phillips
1880	10	Fort Smith	Sebastian
1882	4	Union	Lee
1882	1	Woodruff	Woodruff
1883	3	Plumerville	Conway
1887	8	Helena	Phillips
1889	8	Conway	Conway
1890	7	Morillton	Conway
1891	2	Plumerville	Conway
1891	46	Little Rock	Pulaski
1893	2		
1898	1	Little Rock	Pulaski
1899	2	Little Rock	Pulaski
1899	4	Hot Springs	Garland
1900	1	Little Rock	Pulaski
1904	4	Little Rock	Pulaski

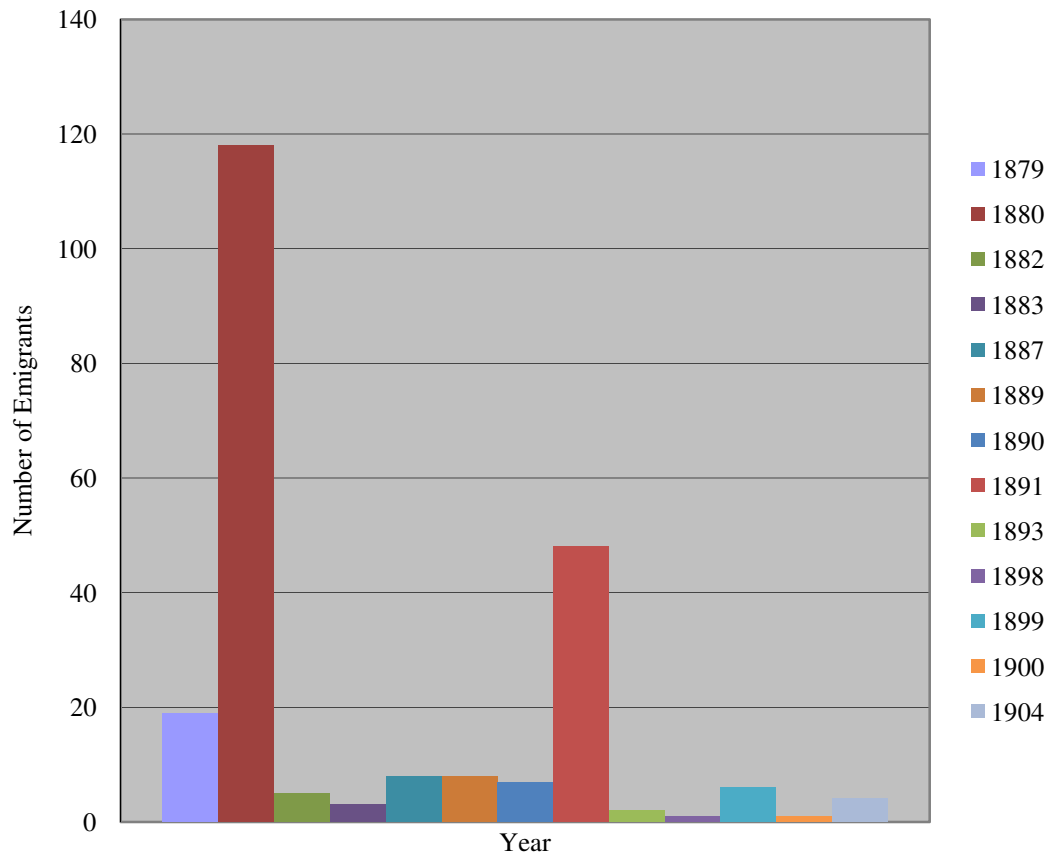


Figure 13. Emigration Expeditions from Arkansas to Liberia

By the 1890s when political tension escalated as hopes for a biracial populist movement died, another large order of emigrants rationalized leaving Arkansas for Liberia. This time, residents of the central Arkansas counties of Conway and Pulaski organized for Liberian emigration. During this period violence in the state again increased and election fraud was rampant. The rapidity with which these repression spread and not their degree, Barnes argues

drove the increase of separatist interest in Arkansas.²⁹ Barnes shows that Arkansas, like other southern states, experienced significant separatist movements after drastic periods of disorder.

Political tensions also account for large numbers of black Floridians leaving the state during the late nineteenth century. They had already been migrating in and out of the state for economic reasons when the separatist movement began in the 1880s. Some had even founded black separatist towns within the state.³⁰ Like other black southerners, black Floridians, at times of severe peril, actively sought emigration to Liberia in order to better their condition. During the late nineteenth century, Florida was undergoing drastic political changes that unsettled many black residents, who became advocates of emigration after the political disorder and accompanying violence.

Florida, along with South Carolina and Louisiana, was one of the last of the Southern states to continue to have black legislators after the Compromise of 1877. Blacks obtained numerous political offices in the central and western counties of the state with larger black populations.³¹ In Alachua County, in central Florida, black residents managed to elect a black Republican, Josiah T. Walls, twice to the U. S. Senate. However, the “Lilly White” segment of the party worked to form strong bonds with the business community to end African American power both within the party and state. In 1888, a white Republican committee disposed Senator Walls and blocked his reelection.³² It was during this redemption period that the majority of Florida’s black separatists emigrated to Liberia.

²⁹ Barnes, 5.

³⁰ Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: the Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 69-72; Frank M. Otey, *Eatonville Florida: A Brief History of One of America’s First Freedmen’s Towns* (Winter Park, FL: Four-G Publishers, 1989).

³¹ Canter Brown, *Florida’s Black Public Officials, 1867-1924* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 45-47.

³² Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: the Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920*, 57-58.

In 1889, black residents from neighboring Marion County were fed up with these conditions when they wrote Secretary Coppinger of the ACS about a rumor that it only cost one dollar to be sponsored as an emigrant. If this rumor were true, one black man claimed that residents were, “reddy and waiting,” to go to Liberia and simply needed to know “when can we get shiping and when to send the money.”³³ While some African Americans may have supported independent reform candidates or even liberal Democratic politicians, the sudden demise of black political power in Florida was all too often caused by legal and illegal efforts aimed at disenfranchisement. In both 1880 and 1888 congressional committees convened to investigate widespread electoral fraud. In 1887, the Florida legislature began to follow the example of other Southern states in the Jim Crow era, passing “racially punitive measures,” such as segregation, voting restrictions, and municipal rebounding negatively affecting African American communities.³⁴

In May of that same year, the residents of Concord formed a Liberian Society, and had written to U. S. Senator Preston Plumb of Kansas, black state representative John Mitchell of Leon County and H. W. Chandler the state senator for Marion County for support. D. R. Carroll, a local farmer, stated that he had to miss a day of work every week in order to canvas potential emigrants, in addition to advising the approximately two hundred persons who had already decided to leave. He remained undaunted even when many of the wealthier white residents such as land owners and merchants opposed to emigration went so far as to tell black residents that the emigration movement was only a scheme to sell them into slavery in Spain. Carroll reveals his deeper insight into southern class structure commenting “but the poor white man is in the

³³ Thomas Aaron to William Coppinger, Ocala, Florida 22 July 1889, ACS, LOC.

³⁴ Ortiz, 62-69; United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Privileges and Elections, *Report of the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections with Testimony and Documentary Evidence, on the Election in the State of Florida in 1876* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877).

majority, so far as numbers is concern and they say that they are going to help we off and I believe that they will do so whenever we call on them.”³⁵ He was lucky if lies were the only ways whites showed their disapproval.

Florida boasted the highest number of lynchings in any southern state during the Progressive Era.³⁶ Thanks to intimidation, deception, and organized repression, by the election of 1890 only a handful of black state representatives were left. In this oppressive political climate, Ocala’s black residents formed an emigration club in order to investigate moving to Liberia. The community at Ocala was abuzz with rumors about Liberia and all segments of the population were intrigued by the prospects of leaving. T. Smith and his family were quite poor when they wrote the ACS in 1889. Smith and his son, a twenty year old white boy, who he had raised since childhood, were both very interested in leaving Marion County for Liberia.³⁷ By that same year, county residents had formed a club with several leading figures who regularly corresponded with Secretary Coppinger. William White thanked the Secretary for the much needed books that were sent and Jackson Vaughn bragged that Club no. 54 had three thousand supporters.³⁸ Vaughn’s account is probably exaggerated; although 8 blacks left nearby Orange County, none emigrated from Ocala in 1889. (See Table 14 and Figure 14) Although embellished, Vaughn’s account points the excitement of blacks throughout the state about the prospects of achieving security and livelihood in Liberia.

³⁵ D. R. Carroll to William Coppinger, Concord, Florida, 4 May 1887, ACS, LOC.

³⁶ Margaret Vandiver, *Lethal Punishment, Lynchings and Legal Executions in the South* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 70-88; Brown, *Florida’s Black Public Officials*, 61-62.

³⁷ T. Smith to William Coppinger, Marion County, Florida, 20 July 1889. ACS, LOC.

³⁸ William White to William Coppinger, Ocala, Florida, 13 July 1889, ACS, LOC; Jackson Vaughn to William Coppinger, 16 July 1889, Ocala, Florida, ACS, LOC.

Table 14. Emigration Expeditions from Florida to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1871	5	Ellaville	Madison
1873	6	Jacksonville	Duval
1878	6	Pensecola	Escambia
1886	7	Gainesville	Alachua
1887	2	Gainesville	Alachua
1887	10	Gainesville	Alachua
1887	8	Gainesville	Alachua
1888	19	Gainesville	Alachua
1888	8	Rochelle	Alachua
1888	1	Ocala	Marion
1889	8	Oakland	Orange
1890	3	Monticello	Jefferson
1891	4	Lady Lake	Lake
1891	19	Williston	Levy
1891	2	Ocala	Marion
1893	1	Rockledge	Brevard

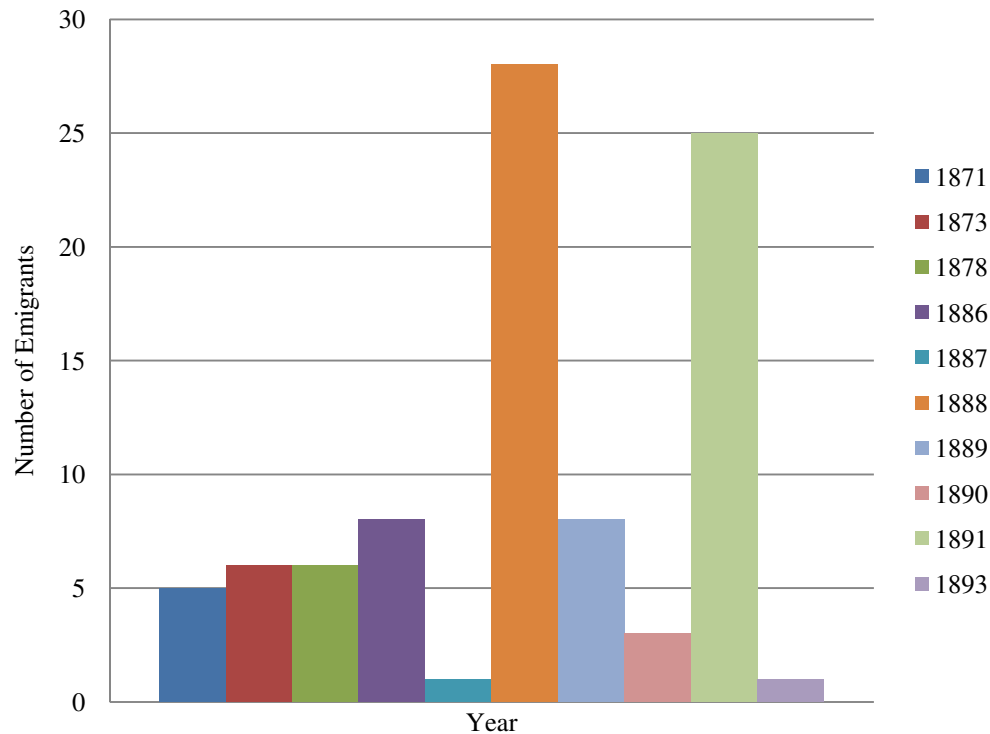


Figure 14. Emigration Expeditions from Florida to Liberia

Other black Floridians were also driven to emigration during times of political turmoil. Rev. C. H. Pearce was active in politics and a leader of the AME church in Florida. He supported black missionary work in Africa, but also the movement of lower class blacks out of the state, especially during the heightened racial tensions of the 1870s and 1880s. In a series of letters exchanged with Bishop Daniel Payne the two shared ideas about African American emigration. Pearce commented, “I am frank to acknowledge that I am in favor of the movement, and were I a young man I would not stand the insults of the American white people.” Pearce supported emigration to Africa, but like other members of the black upper class, he expressed motivating factors far different than that of his lower class brethren and went on to write, “above

all this we have a higher and grander object in view, namely, the civilizing of benighted Africa.”³⁹ Blacks from all classes could rationalized separatism using a variety of reasons. While some upper class black emigrant may have been motivated by philanthropy, the majority of emigrants, those belonging to the lower classes, prioritized their immediate and practical concerns.

Like blacks in Florida, former slaves and poor free blacks in Louisiana also advocated emigration during periods of political disruption. In the northwest parishes of Tensas, Natchitoches, Caddo, St. Mary, Ouachita, Concordia, and Pointe Coupee, where cotton had been widely cultivated, rural blacks embraced the 1879 Exoduster Movement. Historian Joe Lewis Caldwell cites local the social, economic, and geographic causes that contributed to movement emergence during this period.⁴⁰ These considerations drove black Louisianans to advocate separatism, but they only did so during times of political turmoil and only after their living conditions were made worse by excessive violence. Some blacks were intimidated by the violence surrounding the local political elections of 1878 and began to advocate emigration during this period. Henry Adams, the leader of the Exoduster movement in Louisiana, thought that many blacks would leave the state if General W. S. Hancock was elected in 1880 and believed that within two years time all would be “in Liberia or some other country rather than the South.”⁴¹ After the presidential election of 1876 Adams commented the political frustrations driving the emigration movements, stating “the Negroes did not lose all hope of bettering their condition until 1877, and only then because they gave the southern state governments pass under

³⁹ C. H. Pearce, “African Emigration, or Colored Americans and Africa-Colored Americans and America – Letter to the Bishop,” *Christian Recorder* 25 July 1878, <<http://www.accessible.com.proxy.library.vanderbilt.edu/accessible/preLog>>.

⁴⁰ Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction*, 160; Joe Louis Caldwell, “Anyplace But Here: Kansas Fever in Northeast Louisiana,” in *The Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Series in Louisiana History* XI. *The African American Experience in Louisiana Part B, From the Civil War to Jim Crow*, Edited by Charles Vincent (Lafayette, LA: The Center for Louisiana Studies, 2000), 418-432, 418-421.

⁴¹ Painter, 160-174; Henry Adams to William Coppinger, 12 October 1880, New Orleans, Louisiana, ACS, LOC.

the control and into the hand of the very same men who had owned them as slaves.” Other emigrants from Tensas and Concordia parishes expressed similar concerns. About 150 blacks from those areas who had left the state for Kansas in 1879 were interviewed while waiting in route at Natchez, Mississippi. Regarding recent national events, Adams commented about the group, “They assured without exception that Tensas was not a safe place for them to live in. They were not afraid of being interfered with at present, but they believed there would be bloodshed at the time of the Presidential election, and they desired to be away before that time.”⁴²

The seven emigrants who left for were from Louisiana, all left in 1876, a year of rampant racial violence. Many of the charges of violence came from emigrants located near the state’s urban centers in Shreveport and New Orleans. From these centers, other emigration movements diffused into nearby areas with black populations who were undergoing similar strains. Reporting from Shreveport, Adams found that the movement had spread into south Arkansas and east Texas. In East Baton Rouge Parish, Adams reported a movement was “on foot” to emigrate to Liberia, while other movements were simultaneously taking place in Bossier and Claiborne parishes as well. In Bossier and Caddo parishes, reporters documented that as many as 900 residents had left for Kansas during December 1879.⁴³ Caddo parish was particularly violent, gaining the nickname, “Bloody Caddo,” by some observers and residents. From 1865-1884, whites were responsible for eighty percent of the approximately 466 blacks who were killed.⁴⁴

Black economic and political oppression were widespread in the South, but black Louisianans

⁴² “The Exodus – Additional Testimony,” 12 March 1880, p.72; NEP, KSHS; “The Exodus – The Situation in Louisiana and Mississippi,” *The Chicago Tribune* 17 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁴³ “A Great Movement,” *The African Repository* 53 (October 1877): 114; “The Exodus,” *The Chicago Tribune* 13 January 1880, p. 63, NEP, KSHS.

⁴⁴ Henry Adams to William Coppinger, New Orleans, Louisiana, 10 November 1880, ACS, LOC; Gilles Vandal, “The Policy of Violence in Caddo Parish, 1865-1884,” in *The Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Series in Louisiana History IX, The African American Experience in Louisiana Part B From the Civil War to Jim Crow* Charles Vincent, ed., (Lafayette, LA: The Center for Louisiana Studies, 2000), 205-222, 206-209.

did not choose to emigrate until local political intimidations coupled with racial violence severely disrupted their daily lives.

Political violence also preceded separatist enthusiasm in the eastern and central portions of Texas. Specifically, Washington, Burleson, Grimes, Nacogdoches, Walker, and Waller counties all experienced separatist movements to the Great Plains, most notably Oklahoma and Kansas. (See Table 24) While some historians such as Lawrence Rice cite “the general economic, social and political discontent of southern Negroes,” as inducing separatism, further analysis will show how local political changes coupled with growing violence spurred the local separatist movements within Texas.⁴⁵

Table 24. Emigrants’ to the Midwest States and Counties of Origin

Counties	Towns
Alabama Counties	
Choctaw	
Lauderdale	Florence
Sumter	
Kentucky Counties	
Boyle	
Fayette	Lexington
Garrard	
Hardin	
Hart	
Jefferson	Louisville
Jessamine	

⁴⁵ Lawrence D. Rice, *The Negro in Texas, 1874-1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 198; Painter, 200.

Table 24, continued.

Kenton	
Mercer	Harrodsburg
Ohio	
Scott	

Louisiana Counties

Bossier	
Caddo	Shreveport
Catahoula	
Concordia	
Madison	Delta
Natchitoches	
Orleans	New Orleans
Ouachita	
Pointe Coupee	
St. Charles	
St. Mary	
Tensas	

Mississippi Counties

Adams	Natchez
Chickasaw	
Hinds	
Homes	
Issaquena	
Madison	
Neshoba	
Warren	Vicksburg
Washington	Greenville
Yazoo	

North Carolina Counties

Greene	
Halifax	
Lenoir	
Wayne	Goldsboro

Table 24, continued.

Wilson

South Carolina

Aiken

Barnwell

Colleton

Chester

Chester

Edgefield

Johnston

Greenville

Hampton

Lexington

Tennessee

Davidson

Nashville

Maury

Rutherford

Texas Counties

Brazos

Bryan

Burleson

Grimes

Harrison

Nacogdoches

Walker

Waller

Washington

Brenham

In the late 1870s, Texas, like much of the South was undergoing political Redemption and in Harrison County, this period was particularly dramatic. During the antebellum era, Harrison County's large slave population of over eight thousand made it a center for cotton

production in the region.⁴⁶ After the War, the large free black population helped elevate Marshall, the county seat, into a center for local black politics in the state. In 1869, Harrison County elected two black representatives to the State Constitutional Convention when only nine black delegates served at the Convention for the entire state. In the 1870s black residents elected blacks to the state Senate and House of Representatives as well as to positions of Sheriff, tax collector, and tax assessor.⁴⁷ For over ten years after the Civil War, black political life flourished in Harrison County. By the mid 1870s, however, Democrats regained power throughout most areas of the state following the Compromise of 1877; two events serving to further endanger black political progress in Marshall.

In the November 1878 Harrison County Democrats lost every election, but the margins of victory were extremely close, in some cases fewer than two hundred votes. Election fraud such as ballot rigging may account for some Democratic votes, but actual conservative efforts to placate black residents did as well. When legitimate appeals or covert attempts at electoral deception failed, Harrison County Democrats resorted to cronyism in order to regain political control of the county by the next election. In a series of law suits and contested elections, they successfully usurped offices held by county Republicans and maintained control of the county throughout the 1880s.⁴⁸

Rev. C. M. Porter of nearby Brazos County first inquired about migration to Kansas during this period of political change by writing Governor St. John. In a letter written in June 1879 on behalf of his congregation, Rev. Porter simply asked the Governor, “To what political

⁴⁶ United States, Census Bureau, *United States Census*, 1860, University of Virginia, Historical Census Browser, <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/>>.

⁴⁷ *Harrison Flag*, 15 February 1868, 14 May 1869 cited in Randolph B. Campbell, *Grass-roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 118, 129.

⁴⁸ *Marshall Messenger*, 21 July 1877, 18 October 1878; *Marshall Tri-Weekly Herald*, 26 September 1878, 15 October 1878, 17 October 1878, cited in Campbell, *Grass-roots Reconstruction in Texas*, 131-132.

party do you belong?” Porter and other blacks supporting separatism were motivated to leave the area by the recent political disruptions and valued a calm political environment when choosing possible locations.⁴⁹

Brazos County had a history of political violence during local elections. After black enfranchisement whites committed numerous acts of racial violence against the county’s black residents before the 1868 elections. Blacks organized militarily after frequent visitations from the Ku Klux Klan. In August whites killed approximately 20 blacks in riot after the discovery that a black man was lynched in the area.⁵⁰

Harrison County blacks first contemplated emigration during their period of local political and social upheaval. Andrew Matthew, a local emigration leader, was more interested in emigration to Liberia than to Oklahoma or Kansas. He began recruiting other area families for a movement after his brother had emigrated to Brewerville with an early group of Harrison County separatists in 1878. Matthew wrote Secretary Coppinger of the ACS frequently in order to make necessary arrangements. In an effort to aid blacks still in Harrison County, Matthew’s brother had apparently, “gone too far in asking passage for them,” from the Society for the upcoming expedition. Undaunted, Matthew persisted in preparing area blacks to leave, explaining to the Secretary that five families had “desposed of all their property and likewise their homes,” and were still planning to leave on June 22, 1880 for New York on their way to Liberia.⁵¹

⁴⁹ C. M. Porter to Governor John St. John, Bryan, Brazos County, Texas, 23 June 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁵⁰ Barry A. Crouch, *The Freedmen’s Bureau and Black Texans* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1992), 102-127.

⁵¹ Andrew Matthew to Secretary William Coppinger, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, 15 March 1880, NEP, KSHS; Andrew Matthews to Secretary William Coppinger, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, 20 June 1880, NEP, KSHS; Some of these families were not allowed to emigrate and became destitute upon reaching New York; Rice, *The Negro in Texas*, 205.

Although relatively few black Texans emigrated to Liberia, many more moved to Oklahoma during the Exoduster movement of 1879. (See Table 20 and Figure 20) In 1880 the majority of Marshall's black residents were small scale farmers. Their foremost concerns were practical matters pertaining to work. Potential emigrants to Kansas writing the Governor St. John wanted to know if they could make a living in the new state, "how they [other emigrants] were getting along," and what were the conditions for land, mules, cows, and horses.⁵²

Table 20. Emigration Expeditions from Texas to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1869	1	Galveston	Galveston
1878	12	Marshall	Harrison
1880	11	Marshall	Harrison
1885	38	Calvert	Robertson

⁵² Bruce Glasrud, "Black Texas Improvement Efforts, 1879-1929, Migration, Separatism, Nationalism," *The Journal of South Texas* 14 no. 2 (2001): 207; Jno. F. Anderson to Governor John St. John, Marshall, Texas, 6 July 1879, NEP, KSHS; Randolph Campbell, *A Southern Community in Crisis, Harrison County, Texas, 1850-1880* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 375-379.

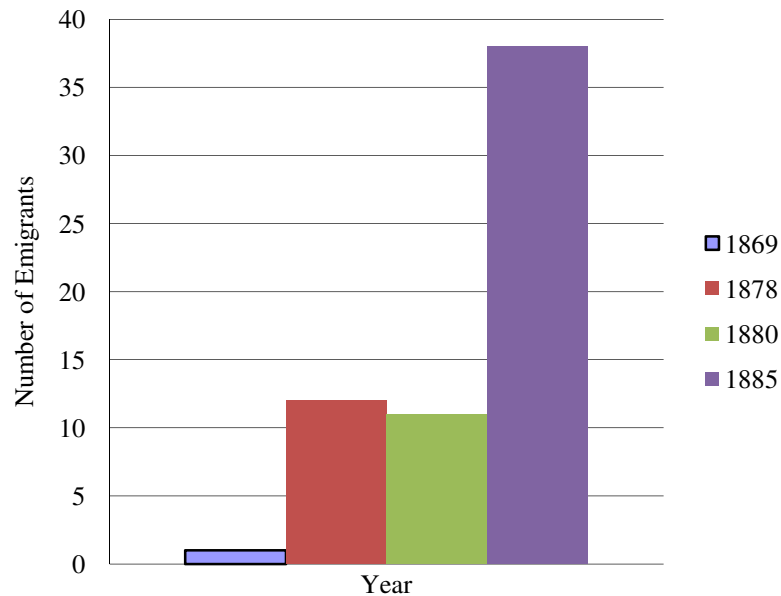


Figure 20. Emigration Expeditions from Texas to Liberia

Rev. Henry Smith believed, “the reason the people quit their farms and come to town and there is not work for them to do, because of mistreatment of the whites.” In the summer of 1880 blacks held a state convention on migration in Houston and Harrison county residents also wanted to hold a county wide meeting exploring the topic. Smith preached in Harrison County, as well as in Marion, Titus, Cass, Updy, Gregg, Smith, Wood, and Rusk counties. He wrote to Governor St. John about the injustices, “We make large crops of cotton in Texas but we never realize a nickel from our cotton. The white folks take all of our corn we make here. Men women and children after farming goes nearly naked.” Smith living in Harrison County travelled to neighboring areas spreading support for separatism and blacks living in those areas who were

experiencing similar local political and social disruptions also began to support emigration movements.⁵³

Political disruption and violence are one example of the immediate precursors of the emergence of emigration movements in the South. However, the amount of political autonomy varied for black separatist groups. Some blacks wanted to achieve political liberty by emigrating to an independent black nation, while others simply wanted to exercise political rights in the U.S. For both, political rights were meaningless without economic opportunity. When either of these goals were threatened in the post war South, some blacks turned toward separatism.

Economic hardships of the late 19th century preceded many of the local emigration movements. The Panic of 1873 devastated black farmers and much of the agricultural economy in the South. Agricultural laborers were hit with prolonged unemployment, while those still employed saw their monthly payments drastically reduced. From 1872 to 1877, the price of cotton fell over 50 percent, while other crops such as sugar, rice, and tobacco also suffered severe declines. Although land became cheaper, farmers fell further and further in debt and the number of tenant farmers who could not afford to buy land steadily rose. Likewise, sharecropping increased as more and more planters could no longer afford to pay wages. Black artisans also suffered as commerce in Southern cities deteriorated.⁵⁴

Other reasons for black economic hardship were more orchestrated. Violence perpetrated to ensure black economic subordination was perhaps just as prevalent as acts committed in defiance of black suffrage. The coercion of black labor into an economic underclass was fundamental to the restoration of the South's old system of race relations centering on

⁵³ Reverend Henry Smith to Governor John St. John, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, 19 May 1879, NEP, KSHS; Reverend Henry Smith to Governor John P. St. John, 7 May 1879, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, NEP, KSHS; Reverend Henry Smith to Governor John St. John, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, 7 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁵⁴ Foner, 535-537; 515.

subjugation. Blacks who criticized the wages for their labor, lien on their crops, or who were audacious enough to be economically savvy became targets for the Klan or any group of whites who believed they were upsetting the traditional racial order. Similarly to how the New Departure only paid lip service to democratic restructuring of politics, so too did the New South retreat from its ethos of a new economic order free of labor exploitation.⁵⁵ While many black separatists may have harbored support for nationalism and emigration, it was the stressful economy coupled with violence during the 1870s that catalyzed their mobilization.

Virginia's participation in the Exoduster Movement was not extensive, with only a few hundred blacks from the state participating.⁵⁶ In 1879 blacks elected W. N. Woodbridge of Manchester chairman of emigration and communication with other states and territories. He wrote Governor St. John complaining about, "how we are treated by the Judiciary Department of the state," and that "we can not stand the burdens placed upon us by the state authorities." Woodbridge declared that a state convention had taken place advocating emigration to whatever state or territory where their, "rights and privileges can be respected and we can be recognized as citizens as we are only recognized in the state in one sense and that is in the payment of taxes."⁵⁷ The previous year Virginia had implemented a poll tax, retarding the power of the black electorate. In spite of this discrimination, Virginia blacks continued to maintain some political authority until the 1890s. Political oppression, therefore, was generally not the catalyst for the emergence of separatism.

In general, Virginia saw relatively few emigration movements during the late nineteenth century. (See Table 21 and Figure 21) During most of this period, records indicate that only a few family groups and individuals emigrated from the state's urban centers to Liberia. Elijah

⁵⁵ Foner, 428-429, 420-421.

⁵⁶ Cohen, *At Freedom's Edge*, 170.

⁵⁷ W. N. Woodbridge to Governor John St. John, Manchester, Virginia, 6 July 1879. NEF, KSHS.

Skinner left with his wife from Norfolk in 1887 and did not express the reasons for his decision to leave when he wrote the ACS about his preparations.⁵⁸

Table 21. Emigration Expeditions from Virginia to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1865	150	Lynchburg	Lynchburg
1867	4	Charlottesville	Albemarle
1876	1	Norfolk	Norfolk
1878	1	Berryville	Clarke
1878	3	Norfolk	Norfolk
1883	1	Richmond	Richmond
1887	2	Norfolk	Norfolk
1888	1	Afton	Nelson

⁵⁸ E. Skinner to William Coppinger, Norfolk, Virginia, 1 April 1887, 11 April 1887, 15 April 1887; 4 May 1887, 7 May 1887, ACS, LOC; "Roll of Emigrants to Cape Mount, Liberia," *African Repository* 64 (January 1887): 39.

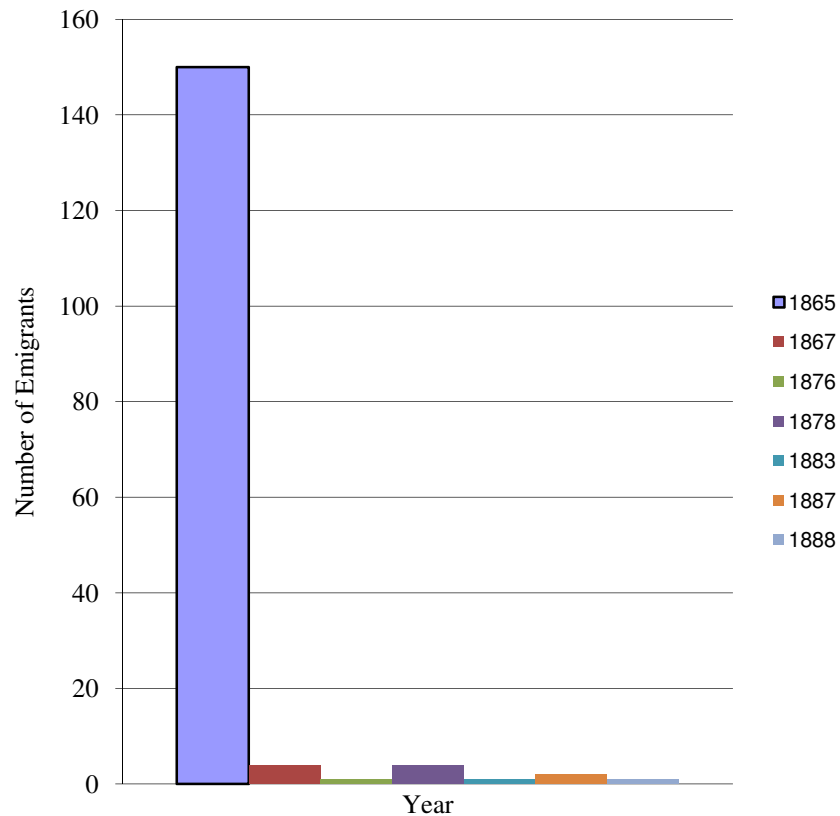


Figure 21. Emigration Expeditions from Virginia to Liberia

Economic conditions triggered the only large movement of emigrants from Virginia, which occurred almost immediately after the Civil War, when over one hundred freedmen left Lynchburg for Liberia in the fall of 1865. Following the War, Lynchburg's business community rapidly deteriorated with lower class blacks and whites vying for employment, conditions that only served to worsen the city's high racial tensions. Historian Steven Tripp considers the acute periods of racial violence to be caused by white men fulfilling a "moral duty" to ensure white social control and conservatism. One can also see the connection between violence and economic scarcity. Several incidents of violence occur between black and white business owners

and between the lower classes of both races during the period.⁵⁹ Most freed people in the South equated freedom with autonomy and landownership. When forced labor contracts began to be widely used after the Civil War, the practice extinguished black hopes for self sufficiency especially for the residents of Lynchburg.⁶⁰

This economic inequality and the escalating racial violence made everyday life extremely difficult for Lynchburg's freedmen. As early as the summer of 1865 it was clear that emancipation had not brought true freedom. As a result, some calculated that separatism was the only guarantee of autonomy and freedom. Mack Nuckles was the leader of the large Lynchburg immigration movement to Liberia and claimed that all the freedmen in Lynchburg and other neighboring areas wanted to go. William Douglass, a Liberian from Albemarle County, also assisted in recruitment, acting as an agent of the ACS, which ultimately paid the expenses of the Lynchburg group. Nuckles described how many residents advocated emigration before the war, declaring that, "many who desired to migrate long before but could not all cause of slavery bondage." Locals organized the African Emigration Society which held meetings every second and fourth Sunday. The group consisted of "men of all trades," who had a "common education." Members of the society authenticated many of Nuckles' claims. When Secretary William Coppinger met with the group he commented how many had wanted to emigrate for years. As a whole the group was extremely industrious, and included mechanics, carpenters, book and shoemakers, blacksmiths and brick layers. Coppinger recorded their high level of enthusiasm for emigration and how warm he was treated by his hosts, receiving a watermelon and peaches from the group in appreciation for his work. Coppinger bragged to the past Secretary of the ACS

⁵⁹ Steven Elliot Tripp, *Yankee Town, Southern City, Race and Class Relations in Civil War Lynchburg* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 164-169, 224-230.

⁶⁰ Lynda Morgan, *Emancipation in Virginia's Tobacco Belt, 1850-1870* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 128, 135-139.

William McClain if he was treated as kindly on his recent trip to Barbados, where he had assisted black Barbadian desiring to emigrate to Liberia. Movement enthusiasm had even spread to white Virginians as well. Coppinger wrote that, “The Nigger is all the talk and anything is popular which looks to their removal from the South.” Indeed , many whites actively supported black emigration movements and a Commander of the District authorized the Freedmen’s Bureau to help with the Lynchburg group’s transportation to the coast.⁶¹

The expectations for life after the Civil War did not measure up to present realities for black Virginians, so support for separatism increased among some of the state’s black residents. Nuckles professed a simple desire to live and work freely, writing, “the colored man can if an opportunity is granted to him, he will be of some use.”⁶² Although blacks continued to relocate within Virginia and to neighboring areas, after 1865 these endeavors were mostly undertaken by families or small groups of individuals. The instability of postwar conditions and rapid economic disillusionment brought about the emergence of a large emigration movement in Lynchburg. As economic frustrations increased movements across the South began to take place.

While Kentucky did not experience a large scale emigration to Liberia after 1865, thousands of blacks relocated to other states. In 1880 of the 43,000 blacks living in Kansas, almost 7,000 claimed Kentucky as their state of birth.⁶³ During the Exoduster Movement, groups of blacks from Fayette, Garrard, Scott, Boyle, and Jefferson counties in central and northern Kentucky migrated to Kansas. Many of the counties that saw significant numbers of

⁶¹ Mack Nuckles to Secretary William Coppinger, 26 August 1865, Lynchburg, Virginia, ACS, LOC; Mack Nuckles to William McClain, 10 July 1865, Lynchburg, Virginia, ACS, LOC; Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2007), 129; William Coppinger to William McClain, 7 September 1865, Mountain House, Virginia, ACS, LOC.

⁶² Mack Nuckles to Secretary William Coppinger, 26 August 1865, Lynchburg, Virginia, ACS, LOC.

⁶³ William Cohen, *At Freedom’s Edge, Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Racial Control* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 170.

movement participants like Scott, Jessamine, and Fayette counties were geographically close to one another. Colonies of families from Ohio County were also reported to have left as late as 1880.⁶⁴ The few letters that did come to the ACS from black Kentuckians also appeared about this time. In 1880, S. H. Jones was a teacher and recently ordained minister who wanted to go where he could do the most good, writing, “my education ought to be worth more there in Liberia than it is here. I think I might influence many others to go to Liberia if I was sure that their situations would be bettered by going.”⁶⁵

Most Kentucky separatists who did emigrate, moved to Kansas. Because political inequality was relatively continuous in Kentucky, with no significant rise in black politicians followed by a rapid decline as occurred elsewhere in the South, political oppression is not a satisfactory explanation for the migration.⁶⁶ Rather, a striking economic disruption accounts for the emergence of Kentucky’s postwar separatist movements.

The first Kentucky emigrants to Kansas organized shortly after the economic crisis of 1873. The following year Reverend John Dudley persuaded a group of families to leave Hart County. Although many in the group became stranded in Louisville, this setback did not deter James Rowlett’s family and at least one other family from leaving for Kansas in 1875.⁶⁷ Separatists in Louisville were worried about their economic livelihoods. They wanted to know what type of work was available, what was the average wage, and if there was material handy for building. M. F. Striger, a white Republican, commented about the widespread exploitation of blacks as the cause for the Exoduster Movement in the region, that they “have been unfairly dealt

⁶⁴ Marion Lucas, *A History of Blacks in Kentucky, From Slavery to Segregation, 1760-1891* vol. I (Frankfurt, Kentucky: Kentucky Historical Society, 1992), 287; “Exodus from Kentucky,” March 12, p. 7, NEP, KSHS.

⁶⁵ S. H. Jones to William Coppinger, Murray, Kentucky, 17 September 1880, ACS, LOC.

⁶⁶ Lucas, *A History of Blacks in Kentucky*, 292, 187-194; Blacks in Kentucky did not gain the franchise until 1870 and were afterwards relegated to the periphery of the Republican Party throughout the Reconstruction period.

⁶⁷ Lucas, 286.

with really robbed year after year of their earnings and also only deprived of their political rights, but year after year insecure in both life and property.”⁶⁸ Economic inequality was widespread in Kentucky, but alone it is an insufficient explanation to explain why separatist movements emerged. The combination of a severe economic depression coupled with racial violence offers a more plausible explanation for why Kentucky blacks chose to leave when they did.

The majority of the counties from which emigrants left for Kansas during the 1870s also experienced at least one act of racial violence against its black residents during the Reconstruction period. In Fayette County alone, eleven black men were lynched from 1870 to 1879. Although violence was tied to some political elections, in Kentucky, whites committed most instances of racial violence against blacks engaged in competitive economic activity.⁶⁹ Striger felt that white Republicans should, “feel highly honored by the terror,” and that they should be thankful to the perpetrators, because it distinguishes “them from us.” Striger’s political pride is inspiring, but reveals and all too gloomy and disturbing trend. From 1866 to 1879, whites murdered nine black men from Mercer County, seven from Jessamine County, three from Boyle County, two from Garrard County, one from Scott County and one from Jefferson County. Striger went on to declare, “A majority of the brutes that compose the Democratic Party of the South are cut-throats and midnight assassins who hold that their highest duty is to hunt down and shoot the negro as they would the wild beasts of the forest.”⁷⁰ This intense period of violence coincided with the period of extreme financial crisis and became the period when most of Kentucky’s blacks decided to emigrate.

⁶⁸ H. C. Weeder to Gov. John St. John, Louisville, Kentucky, 9 September 1879, NEP, KSHS; M. F. Striger to Gov. John St. John, Kenton Kentucky, 18 May 1879.

⁶⁹ George C. Wright, *Racial Violence in Kentucky, 1865-1940, Lynchings, Mob Rule, and “Legal Lynchings”* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 10-11; Lucas, 194-195, 305-306.

⁷⁰ Wright, *Racial Violence in Kentucky*, 307-313; M. F. Striger to Gov. John St. John, Kenton, Kentucky, 18 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

North Carolina had an extensive colonization history before the Civil War and blacks within the state continued to support separatism after the War's end. The economic woes of the 1870s distressed many North Carolina black residents, inducing many to leave. Historian Claude Clegg studies the antebellum and postwar movements from North Carolina to Liberia and finds that separatism was affected by "economic conditions, tending to peter out during hard times due to declining donations. It was also attuned to the tenor of race relations with surges occurring during periods of notable slave resistance and white repression."⁷¹ Clegg's theoretical argument largely uses the political opportunity model and examines how community resources were utilized in the development of North Carolina separatist movements.

Economic strains account for the timing of movements North Carolina. Although the emigrant groups leaving North Carolina for Liberia before 1873 were larger than those leaving after the economic crisis, the number of movements was relatively small. The majority of emigrants to Liberia occurred after 1873, when economic disruption was most profoundly felt in the everyday lives of blacks. (See Table 17 and Figure 17) Economic disorder seems to have also been a motivating factor for the black North Carolinians who participated in the Exoduster Movement although many chose to settle in Indiana rather than go on to Kansas.

Table 17. Emigration Expeditions to North Carolina from Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Town	County
1869	79	Bertie	Windsor

⁷¹ Claude Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 5

Table 17, continued.

1869	44	Martin	Jamesville
1870	111	Bertie	Windsor
1870	81	Washington	Plymouth
1871	5	Bertie	Windsor
1874	5	Duphin	Flemington
1874	7	Tyrell	Columbia
1874	10	Washington	Plymouth
		Pasquotank,	Elizabeth
1876	5	Camden	City
1876	8	Washington	Plymouth
1877	7	Duphin	Warsaw
1878	2	Camden	Shiloh
1878	51	Currituck	Indian Town
1878	7	Duplin	Warsaw
1878	21	Pasquotank	Rose Dale
1878	8	Pasquotank	Rose Dale
1878	4	Perquimons	Woodville
1878	1	Wake	Raliegh
1878	4	Wake	Morrisville
1879	14	Craven	New Berne
1879	13	Craven	New Berne
1879	12	Craven	Woodbridge
1879	20	Warren/Halifax	Littleton
1880	5	Cabarrus	Concord
1880	7	Craven	New Berne
1881	30	Cabarrus	Concord
			Black River
1881	1	Sampson	Chapel
1881	4	Warren	Warrenton?
1882	19	Craven	Cobton
1883	12	Currituck	Indian Ridge
1883	1	Mecklenburg	Charlotte
1883	6	Perquimons	Winfall
1884	20	Currituck	Shawboro
1886	2	Richmond	Rockingham
1887	1	Craven	New Berne
1887	1	Craven	New Berne
1887	3	Mecklenburg	Charlotte
1887	37	Mecklenburg	Charlotte
1887	1	Wake	Raliegh

Table 17, continued.

1887	2	Wake	Raliegh
1887	3	Wake	Raliegh
1890	4	Halifax	Littleton
1893	1		

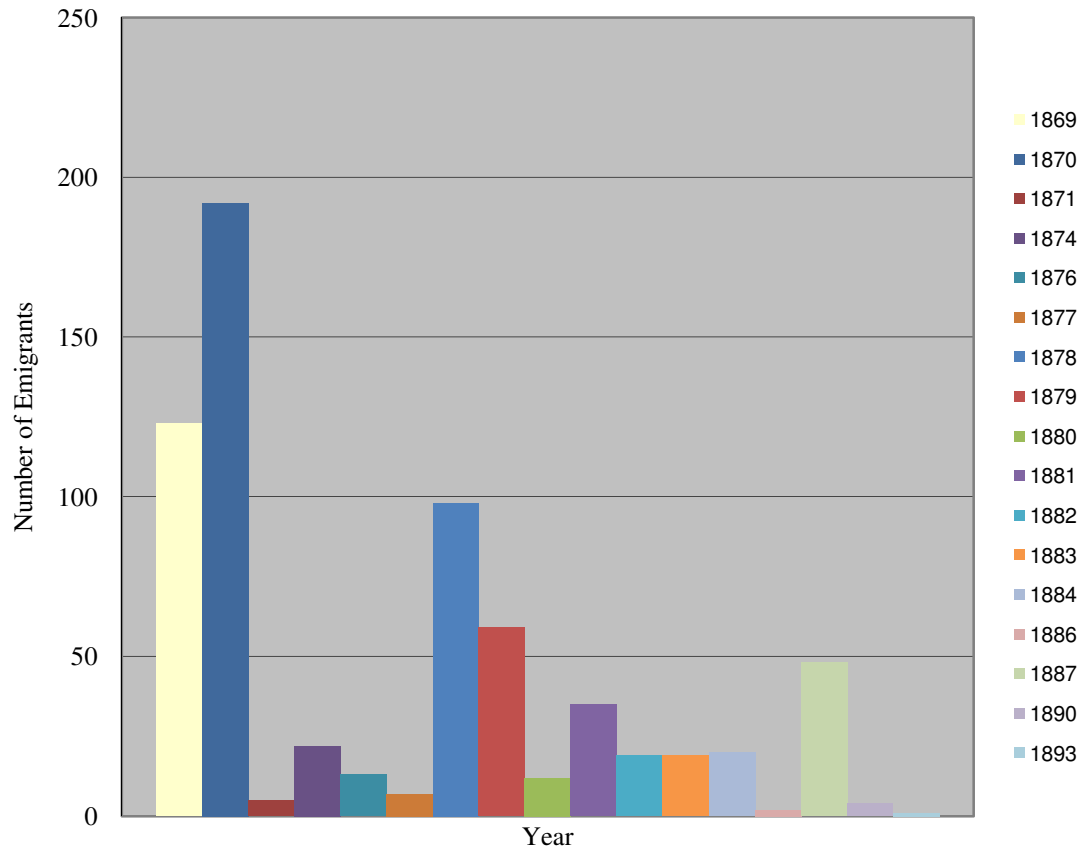


Figure 17. Emigration Expeditions to North Carolina from Liberia

During the Senate hearing investigating the Exoduster Movement to Kansas, Senator Vance of North Carolina questioned two men from the Goldsboro area about “what inducement was held out for them to leave North Carolina?” Both interviewees gave strikingly similar

answers. Hilliard Ellis replied, “Some, I think, were going for better wages, and some were complaining that they could not get their rights under the law.” When asked his opinion of “why they left,” Ellis Dickenson replied, “I have heard them say they were going because they heard they could get better wages.”⁷² Both men cited the Exodusters’ economic motivations.

During the investigations, senators also questioned John Kelley of Raleigh. Reporters described him as uneducated, and a person who “knew little about the Exodus or politics.” Kelley did complain about the judicial system and the imprisonment of blacks stating “they were farmed out to the railroads,” and that all of the railroads in the state were being built by “colored convict labor.” When asked about the criminal charges, Kelley’s answer reflects a view that sees crime as a result of necessity, stating, “I tell you, it ain’t no use for a man to try and live on \$5 or \$6 a month. He can’t do it nohow, and he is bound to make it up somway.”⁷³ While Kelley objected to the treatment of blacks in the North Carolina court system, his account reflected a deeper frustration with economic inequalities which he believed were the underlying causes of crime.

For southern freedmen, the most secure way to achieve equality and economic security was through land ownership. Farmers in Halifax County were preparing to leave for Liberia and inquired to the ACS about the price of land in the country. Cary Bellamy, a Craven county farmer, found that, “paper dollars is so scarce,” he could not afford to send even \$2.00 towards his passage.⁷⁴ Although many friends of the Bellamy family had chosen to emigrate to Indiana, Bellamy wanted to emigrate to Liberia and complained, “It has been so dreadful hard for a

⁷² Senator Zebulon Vance, Ellis Dickenson, Hilliard Ellis, United States, Congress, Senate. Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States. Vol. 1. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 254-260.

⁷³ “The Exodus: Yesterday’s Witness,” *The Chicago Tribune* 6 February 1880. NEP, KSHS.

⁷⁴ A. Hockaday to William Coppinger, South Gaston, Halifax County, North Carolina, 16 December 1880, ACS, LOC; Cary Bellamy to William Coppinger, Battleboro, North Carolina, 20 January 1880, ACS, LOC.

colored man to get any money here in the south.” Samuel Perry of Goldsboro and Peter Williams, a local preacher, were leaders of the emigration movement to Indiana and both testified during the Senate investigation. Witnesses at the hearings reported that Exodusters held mass meetings and had secret societies that circulated news that wages could be obtained in Indiana from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per day. Perry and Williams described the situation of low wages and observed, “their people were determined to go somewhere.”⁷⁵

Along with strained economic conditions, acts of violence immediately preceded the emergence of emigration movements in North Carolina. Racial violence that occurred after Republicans gained control of the state government in 1868 had resulted in an unprecedented wave of terror. During this period of relative political opportunity, racial violence after 1868 was the deciding factor that pushed so many economically impoverished black North Carolinians to advocate separatism. Congressional reports of the early 1870s revealed that at least 174 “visitations” by the Ku Klux Klan to African Americans had occurred throughout the state. Leaders of the Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society in Elizabeth City declared that suffrage had, “been of no practical benefit to us,” and that, “It has also increased the prejudice against us.” White residents threatened Harry Roberts, a local leader of an emigration movement to Liberia from New Bern because of the community wide support that the movement was receiving. Roberts wrote Secretary Coppinger, “I must go away from hear for I have ben told that I had sent some people away. I had better get away. If live I will lik fo you to get all you can. I will be redey in fall. if I liv noth hap to me, I want to go to liberia.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ King S. Bellamy to William Coppinger, Battleboro, North Carolina, 11 January 1880, ACS, LOC; Z. Taylor Evans Interview, “The Negro Exodus: A Railway Officials Testimony,” 21 January 1880, *The Chicago Tribune*, p. 63, NEP, KSHS.

⁷⁶ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 251; Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society, “Address to the People of Color by the Elizabeth City (N. C.) Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society,” (1871), 2; Harry Roberts to William Coppinger, New Bern, North Carolina, 23 April 1880, ACS, LOC.

In regard to the importance of location in social movement emergence, Clegg asserts that emigration, “found its most fertile ground in the eastern agricultural counties with high concentrations of blacks, both enslaved and free, in proximity to the Atlantic.”⁷⁷ Clegg raises an interesting point, but does not test its accuracy. The idea that movement participation may depend in part to actual proximity to the Atlantic is not supported by the map showing the separatist movements occurring throughout the state during the same period. Rather, movement activity occurred in clusters, affected not by proximity to the Ocean, but by the proximity to the site of other local movements.

North Carolina exemplifies the spatial tendency of separatist movements to emerge in areas or in close proximity to areas with a prior separatist history. John Kirk of Mecklenburg County, was only 17 years old when he wrote Secretary Coppinger in 1887. He wanted to go to Liberia to see his Father, Daniel Kirk, who had, “been away along time.”⁷⁸ Kirk’s statement indicates the tendency of postwar emigration movements to occur in the same place at different times. The Charlotte area saw three groups of emigrants leave from 1883-1887 and followed the pattern of many movements throughout the South, when emigrants from one area were followed or preceded by emigrants from the same area.

These consecutive types of movements occurred when large groups of emigrants followed smaller groups from the same area who sent back a positive report. Harry Roberts of New Berne wanted to know what the trip had cost a group of local movement participants who had already emigrated. A small group of movement holdouts could likewise emigrate after a large movement, again, following a positive report. Alexander Brown of Littleton wrote the ACS about his family who were part of the group of 1879 emigrants who left for Liberia. After

⁷⁷ Clegg, *The Price of Liberty*, 5; For a history of environmental and political conditions impacting the area see pages 7-17 and for a summary of the post war emigration movement see pages 249-270.

⁷⁸ John W. Kirk to William Coppinger, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 10 April 1887, ACS, LOC.

hearing back from his family, he noticed a sharp increase in the high level of excitement throughout the area regarding emigration, writing to Secretary Coppinger, “Now you say all that did not go last December could go now but we want to go next December. Now we has got several letters from Norfleet Brown and the people is very anxious to go now he give a very good report of the place.”⁷⁹ This residual movement tendency is clearly demonstrated by the numerous movements to Liberia occurring in North Carolina from 1865-1892. Of the 17 counties that experienced separatist movements, only four occurred as one time events, whereas more than two-thirds of the counties experienced more than one movement.

Black South Carolinians were also driven to participate in emigration movements after the Civil War by economic disparities. George Devlin and George Tindall have documented the widespread emigration and migration of blacks out of the state.⁸⁰ During the late 1860s and the 1870s, black Republicans gained political power in the state, but this development triggered widespread political violence which was especially pronounced during the election of 1870 and after the campaign of 1876. During this period blacks formed militias in the northwestern counties of the state. It was in this atmosphere when local preacher and leader Elias Hill left York County in the Piedmont area with over one hundred followers for Liberia after the Ku Klux Klan brutally beat him in 1871.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Alexander Brown to William Coppinger, Littleton, North Carolina, 12 April 1880, ACS, LOC; Harry Roberts to William Coppinger, 6 February 1880, New Berne, North Carolina, ACS, LOC; Alexander Brown to William Coppinger, Littleton, North Carolina, 4 April 1880, ACS, LOC.

⁸⁰ George Devlin, *South Carolina and Black Migration, 1865-1940* (New York: Grand Publishing, 1989), 83-108; George Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1952), 153-185. Tindall gives an overview of the Liberian Joint Stock Company, which blacks organized during the late 1870s in Charleston, South Carolina, on pages 155-168.

⁸¹ John Fabian Witt, *Patriots and Cosmopolitans, Hidden Histories of American Law* (Harvard University Press, 2007), 113-115. Witt discusses legal issues in his analysis of grassroots emigration leader Reverend Elias Hill and the 1869 Clay Hill emigrants to Liberia; Tindall, 154; Thomas C. Holt, *Black over White, Negro Political Leadership in South Carolina* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 141-143; Foner, 430-431.

In other South Carolina emigration movements political motives were less of an incentive for lower class black separatists than the amount of social disorder resulting from the widespread violence and economic need. During the peak time of emigration movements in South Carolina during the 1860s and 1870s economic inequality proliferated. (See Table 18 and Figure 18) Freedmen primarily equated freedom with land and the lack of available land after the war caused some to leave the state. C. R. Reeves of Marion County had, “settled all my business with Col. Mullin peaceable,” when he wrote Secretary Coppinger in 1867. Others in his party, however, “had to leave in the night not that there is any crimes among them but because they don’t want any words with Ole Master.” Reeves listed his occupation as a minister, so his acquired debts may have been somewhat less than the 107 other farmers, carpenters, and coopers who emigrated with their families in 1867. Reports that whites opposed emigration movements were widespread, especially in rural districts. In the interior areas black labor was in high demand and employers were worried ho to keep their workers from leaving. James Gadsden gathered a company of about 13 or 14 emigrants in Aiken when a local white man told him, “Yankeys will carry me to Cuba and sell me into slavery again.”⁸²

⁸² Holt, *Black over White*, 24-25; James Gadsden to William McClain, 11 April 1867, Aiken, South Carolina, ACS, LOC; C. R. Reeves to William McClain, Marion County, South Carolina, 12 April 1867; “List of Emigrants for Liberia,” *The African Repository* 43 (July 1867): 204.

Table 18. Emigration Expeditions from South Carolina to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1866	52	Charleston	Charleston
Table, 18 continued.			
1866	167	Newberry	Newberry
1866	43	Columbia	Richland
1867	18	Aiken	Aiken
1867	62	Charleston	Charleston
1867	8	Charleston	Charleston
1867	116	Marion	Marion
1867	18	Mars Bluff	Marion
1867	48	Newberry	Newberry
1868	312	Charleston	Charleston
1868	64	Ridge	Lexington
1871	166	Clay Hill	York
1874	2	Charleston	Charleston
1876	19	Columbia	Richland
		Marion	
1878	1	County	Marion
1879	5	Charleston	Charleston
		Fairfield	Fairfield
1881	3	County	County
1881	3	Columbia	Richland
1886	4	Darlington	Darlington
1886	96	Cureton's	Lancaster
			Lancaster,
1887	15	Fort Mill	York
1891	2	Winnesboro	Fairfield

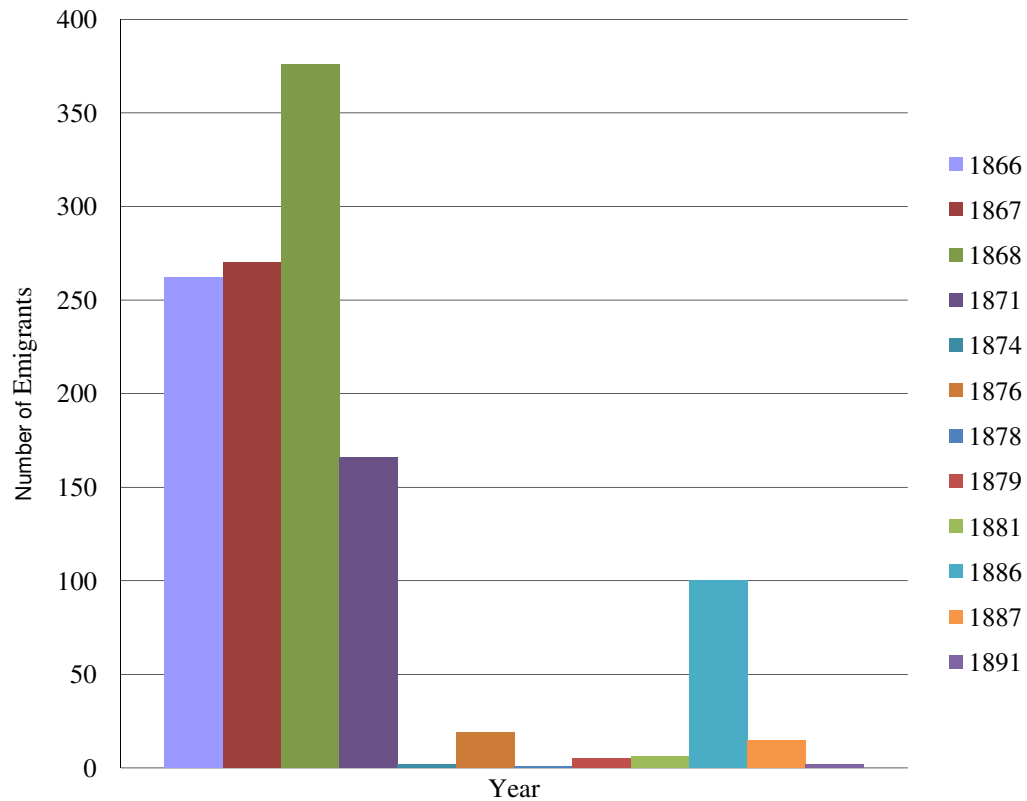


Figure 18. Emigration Movements to South Carolina

Economic considerations also incited some South Carolina blacks to participate in the Exoduster Movement to the Midwest. Aiken and Chester County residents both organized movements to Kansas during the 1870s. Other blacks left from Hampton, Barnwell, and Colleton Counties. Some black South Carolinians also chose Arkansas as their destination. These movements to the Midwest and to Arkansas were less frequent than those to Africa and researchers have again cited the state's distance from Africa as a reasonable influence.⁸³

Because Exodusters left from the same areas as emigrants to Liberia, a more probable account should consider the positive effect of movement emergence. In most cases, the actual

⁸³ Devlin, *South Carolina and Black Migration*, 117-120; Tindall, 169-176.

destination of an emigration movement, whether in or outside of the United States, was of secondary importance to the guarantee of acquiring land in a new settlement. What was most important for black separatists was the ability to live freely and progress.

Impoverished black residents living in Jonesville in Union County held mass meetings to discuss Liberian emigration as late as 1880. In neighboring York County May Withers was leader of the Fort Mill movement and wrote Secretary Coppinger about Liberia before emigrating with four members of her family in 1887. Perhaps she considered the successful movement of emigrants to Liberia nearly twenty years prior before ultimately deciding to leave. Withers was a farmer who wrote on behalf of other farming families in the area who wanted to emigrate to Grand Bassa in Liberia. She listed emigrants' foremost concerns, "People wanting a home fo themselves and children where they will not be molested nor afraid to make an honest living for themselves and children, etc."⁸⁴ The emergence of South Carolina emigration movements after periods of economic strain and violent repression follows the pattern of other movements in the South being initiated after severe disturbances in everyday life.

Black southerners who participated in emigration movements expressed diverse motivations for leaving. This fact does not negate the fact that movements emerging within a region after acute economic or political disruptions coupled with racial violence. Exercising political rights was a concern for some black Mississippi separatists. In Coahoma County, George Smith was relatively well-off compared to other blacks in the area. He intended to sell the stock he owned before leaving for Liberia. Smith wrote that others interested in emigration were also farmers, but unlike him may not be able to afford passage. He cited disenfranchisement as his primary motivation for leaving, writing the ACS that he, "desire to get

⁸⁴ Lonie Long to William Coppinger, 14 February 1880, Jonesville, Union County, South Carolina, ACS, LOC; May Withers, 25 April 1887, Fort Mill, South Carolina, ACS, LOC; May Withers to William Coppinger, 25 April 1887, Fort Mill, South Carolina, ACS, LOC.

out of this country at our earlys hour before the presidents time is out.”⁸⁵ Other blacks in Mississippi most commonly cited economic motivations for advocating separatism. Of the five causes listed by the Mississippi Migration Convention held in 1879 by white citizens in response to Exodus, four cited economic inequalities, while only one cited political or civil injustices.⁸⁶

In Mississippi, economic movements increased during periods of economic stress, most notably during the 1870s. The Rev. H. Ryan, pastor of Wesley Chapel, wrote the ACS about economic problems affecting blacks in Columbus stating a “hundred that have work al the year and have not now a dime in the pocket.” In a letter written to the Society in January, Ryan detailed one dire situation that he saw, “I was with a woman the other day with three or four children and had walked one hundred mile working two years and had not a cent of money to live on.” Ryan organized emigration meetings for blacks in Lowndes County and was familiar with numerous black residents in the area. The group openly petitioned the House and Senate for support. These writings indicate how for the emigrants economic justice trumped political aspirations:

We want to go because we see no prospect of success here. The white people have too much the advantage of us. They have all the land, all the money, and all the education. These things might soon be remedied if there was plenty of work for us to do, and the people were disposed to favor us, but there are so many of us that we cannot all get work to do unless we will work for almost nothing... These things being so, how can we hope to secure homes of our own, or even to provide for our children? Much less can we hope to give them that education which is necessary to fit them for usefulness in life.

Participants emphasized issues of economic progress, security and educational opportunity. This emphasis does not imply the lack of political aspirations, but merely suggests that acquiring political rights was not the main concern for Mississippi emigrants. Ultimately they wanted a higher degree of self determination and reasoned economic success would lead to it. Rev. Ryan

⁸⁵ George H. Smith to William Coppinger, Friars Point, Mississippi, 16 September 1890, ACS, LOC.

⁸⁶ William Windom and Henry W. Blair, “The Proceedings of a Migration Convention and Congressional Action Respecting the Exodus of 1879,” *The Journal of Negro History* 4 (January 1919): 51-92, 52.

articulated this resolve held by many Lowndes County blacks when he wrote Secretary McClain about white southerners; “It is said by the rebel this is a white man government if so we are willing as a colored emigrant to leave it to them and seek a government of our own.”⁸⁷

The recession of 1873 and a series of droughts intensified the economic strain of lower class blacks in the state and induced some to emigrate to the Midwest during the Exoduster Movement. However, the economic crisis alone is an insufficient cause for the emergence of emigration movements. Ongoing economic insecurity coupled with abrupt acts of violence accounts for the rise of supportive movement sentiment in Mississippi. This connection is illustrated by the numerous race riots from 1874-1876 which testify to the racial tension and terror which hasten black relocation.⁸⁸ Black Mississippians participated in only one movement to Liberia before this period. (See Table 16 and Figure 16) The year after this particularly violent episode black separatists developed Liberian emigration organizations in Corinth, Aberdeen, and Meridian.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ “Petitions From Mississippi,” *The African Repository* 46 (August 1868): 237; Rev. H. Ryan, Columbus, Mississippi, 7 January 1868, ACS, LOC, Rev. H. Ryan, Columbus, Mississippi, 19 January 1868, ACS, LOC, Rev. H. Ryan, Columbus, Mississippi, 11 February 1868, ACS, LOC.

⁸⁸ Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1947), 221-223. Fifteen riots occurred between the years 1874-1876, while only three preceded and two followed that date.

⁸⁹ “A Great Movement,” *The African Repository* 53 (October 1877): 114.

Table 16. Emigration Expeditions from Mississippi to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1868	41	Columbus	Lowndes
1878	10	Okolona	Chickasaw
1878	6	Edwards	Hinds
1882	2	Aberdeen	Monroe
1883	1	Columbus	Lowndes
1884	1	Edwards	Hinds
1888	9	Sturgis	Oktibbeha
1890	9	Amory	Monroe
1890	28	Sturgis	Oktibbeha
1891	2	Gunnison	Bolivar

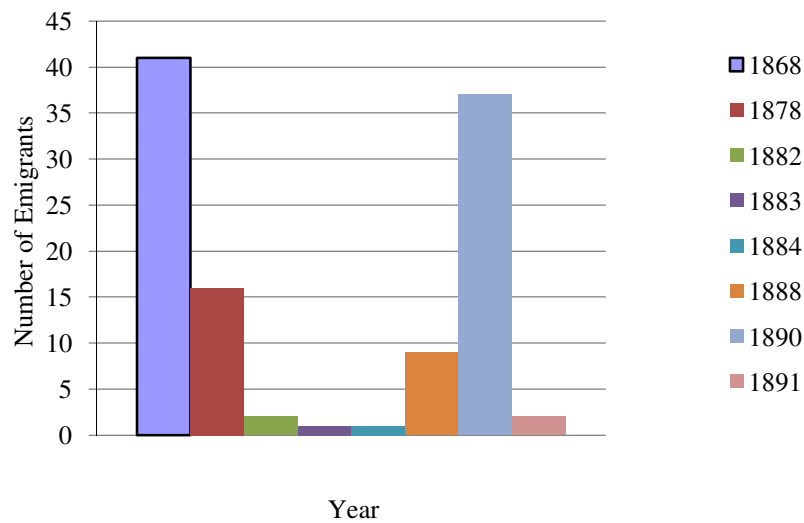


Figure 16. Emigration Expeditions from Mississippi to Liberia

Blacks began to advocate separatism in the mid 1870s, a time of economic tension and widespread violent repressions taking place within the state. Isaiah Montgomery was owned by Confederate President Jefferson Davis during slavery. After the Civil War, Montgomery's father was allowed to purchase land in Davis Bend, Mississippi and cultivate it with the help of several other ex-slaves. Although achieving some degree of independence, economic hardships frustrated many freedmen's efforts. Economic improvement was Montgomery's primary motivation for writing Governor St. John in 1879 about the prospects of work in Kansas. Several blacks from Davis Bend had already left Mississippi for Kansas when Montgomery arrived to meet with relief officials from the Freedmen's Relief Committee. During his visit, Montgomery agreed that if the committee would designate an area or county for the black emigrants, he would purchase land for cultivation and make it available to other black families. Montgomery

commented that the freedmen “had come to feel the keenest anguish over the oppression that has been brought to bear upon them. Finally, they had come to believe that no hope for their true freedom remained for them in the South with one accord it had gone into their minds that like God’s people they must leave the land of bondage and oppression.”⁹⁰

Black Mississippians stated that economic oppression was their major grievance. One potential black emigrant from Hinds County was asked if, “the colored people were leaving because they could not vote the Republican ticket?” He reported, “No, that was not the reason; that they could have got along without voting, but they could not make a living down there; that hard times drove them away.” If one was not satisfied with sharecropping, there were few options but to leave the rural areas in the Natchez district for places where land was available for farming or where industries were in need of labor. Black enfranchisement in Mississippi was often accompanied by numerous incidents of election-day violence. The same article continued with an interview with another emigrant from Hinds County. He reportedly had to “run for his life,” after voting the Republican ticket in 1876.⁹¹ Though not driven by political inequality, after sudden bursts of violence surrounding political events and ongoing periods of economic dearth caused by the recession worsened the quality of life, groups of black Mississippians finally began to advocate separatism.

Even as late as 1890, Mississippi blacks continued to rationalize separatism as a viable option to flee their systematic oppression. The group of emigrants from Sturgis simply wrote, “The people of the South is oppress and can scarly live and want to go where they can live.”

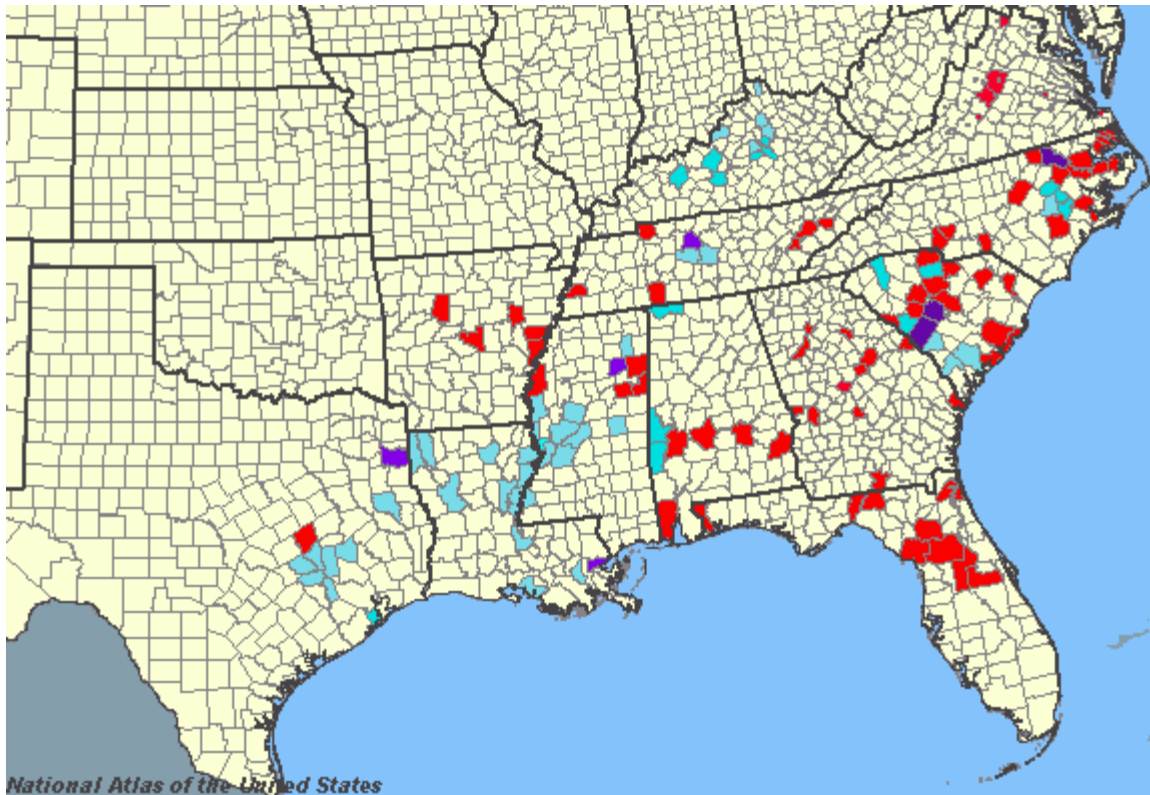
⁹⁰ Isaiah Montgomery to Governor John P. St. John, Mississippi, 2 May 1879, NEP, KSHS; “Talking with Isaiah Montgomery,” *The Chicago Tribune* 17 May, p. 37, NEP, KSHS.

⁹¹ “Negro Refugees at Atchinson,” *The Chicago Tribune* 17 May, p. 37, NEP, KSHS. The white reporter also noted how the first respondent, who did not emphasize black suffrage, was a “bright intelligent man.” Ronald L. Davis, *Good And Faithful, From Slavery to Sharecropping in the Natchez District, 1860-1890* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982).

Rev. S. A. Johnson reported that the people of his district were “very anxious” to go. Johnson, like many other emigration leaders, was a preacher and ministered in Friar’s Point, Lula, Rich, and Clayton. Besides preaching, he also distributed circulars from the *African Repository* to the area’s poor blacks.⁹² Economic disparity continued to plague blacks within the state throughout the late nineteenth century and accounts for the ongoing emergence of emigration movements.

Although emigration movements occurred throughout various parts of the South, they were not sporadically related to one another. Separatist movements generally emerged in a cluster pattern; movement participants resided in neighboring counties before leaving. (See Figure 23) Participation in one area inspired, and in some cases, depended on participation in another. It worked to encourage the formation of separatist movements in nearby areas, because shared geography often resulted in shared political and economic conditions. Though separated by governmental boundaries, the Piedmont and Black Belt counties of states such as Georgia and Alabama shared similar agricultural and demographic characteristics. Black residents from these areas faced similar strained conditions and concurrently reasoned separatism as a remedy.

⁹² Rev. C. William to William Coppinger, Sturgis, Mississippi, June 1887, ACS, LOC, Rev. K. E. Mosley to William Coppinger, Clayton, MS, 9 April 1890, ACS, LOC; Rev. S. A. Johnson to William Coppinger, Lula, Mississippi, 15 April 1890, ACS, LOC.



Colonization movements emerged in counties shown in red. Emigration movements emerged in counties shown in blue. Both emigration and colonization movements emerged in counties shown in purple.

Figure 23. Southern County Separatist Movements

Many of the emigrant communities in Georgia came from the plantation belt in the middle of the state, while other groups left from Georgia's major regional cities of Atlanta in the upper Piedmont and Savannah on the coast. Charles Flynn's study of post-war Georgia argues that despite extreme economic repression, ongoing violence in Georgia was connected not to economic or political oppression, but to a climate of moral protection.⁹³ Flynn correctly asserts the connection between ongoing violence and upholding the white moral social order. However, this social order was also reinforced by the economic class system in the South. A transitive

⁹³ Charles L. Flynn, Jr., *White Land, Black Labor, Caste and Class in Late Nineteenth-Century Georgia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 29-56.

connection exists between economy and violence and both systems ultimately served to reinforce the South's dominant white-over-black ideology.

Some Liberian emigrants from Georgia were motivated by economic considerations. However, Georgia's most intense separatist activity during the years 1867-1872, coincided with major political changes within the state and was the most immediate catalyst to black emigration. (See Table 15 and Figure 15) Historians of Georgia have attributed later emigration movements of the late nineteenth century Jim Crow era to the number of lynchings and the diminution of political rights.⁹⁴ Similar conditions propelled black separatists during the decade after the Civil War to advocate separatism as well. Many black Georgians saw their political hopes dashed after gaining the franchise in 1867, when their newly elected black legislators were legally prohibited from holding office in the state by white officeholders. Although the courts overturned the decision in 1869, the ruling had little effect on the practice of intimidating black voters and politicians. At the same time, a series of disenfranchising initiatives such as poll taxes and voter fraud depressed Republican and black political power. Although fewer black Georgians emigrated to Kansas than to Liberia, some interest in the Exoduster Movement was present. William Haskell of Augusta wrote Governor St. John in 1879 that, "The west is much better than the South for a young man to settle in for a man of reason especially to republicans is not respected in his political rights and cannot exercise his opinion as he wishes."⁹⁵ Blacks in Georgia, whether emigrating to Liberia or the Midwest, cite political motivations for their advocacy.

⁹⁴ Edmund L. Drago, *Black Politicians & Reconstruction in Georgia, A Splendid Failure* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), 141-159; Clarence Bacote, "Negro Proscriptions, Protests, and Proposed Solutions in Georgia, 1880-1908," *The Journal of Southern History* 25 no. 4 (November 1959): 471-498, 471.

⁹⁵ William Haskell to Governor John St. John, Augusta, Georgia, 3 September 1879, NEP, KSHS.

Table 15. Emigration Expeditions from Georgia to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	City	County
1866	194	Macon	Bibb
1867	44	Macon	Bibb
1867	8	Columbus	Moscogee
1867	235	Columbus	Moscogee
1868	12	Savanah	Chatham
1868	25	Sparta	Hancock
1868	37	Columbus	Marion
1868	204	Columbus	Muscogee
1868	5	Augusta	Richmond
1868	29	Augusta	Richmond
1871	3	Savanah	Chatham
1871	63	Valdosta	Lowndes
1872	23	Milledgeville	Baldwin
1872	59	Valdosta	Lowndes
1872	31	Grangersville	Macon
1872	34	Hawkinsville	Pulaski
1873	34	Sparta	Hancock
1873	34	Hawkinsville	Pulaski
1883	1	Grangersville	Macon
1883	1	Hawkinsville	Pulaski
1890	7	Columbus	Muscogee
1891	16	Atlanta	Fulton
1892	1	Augusta	Richmond
1894	2	Summertown	Emanuel
1900	2	Atlanta	Fulton

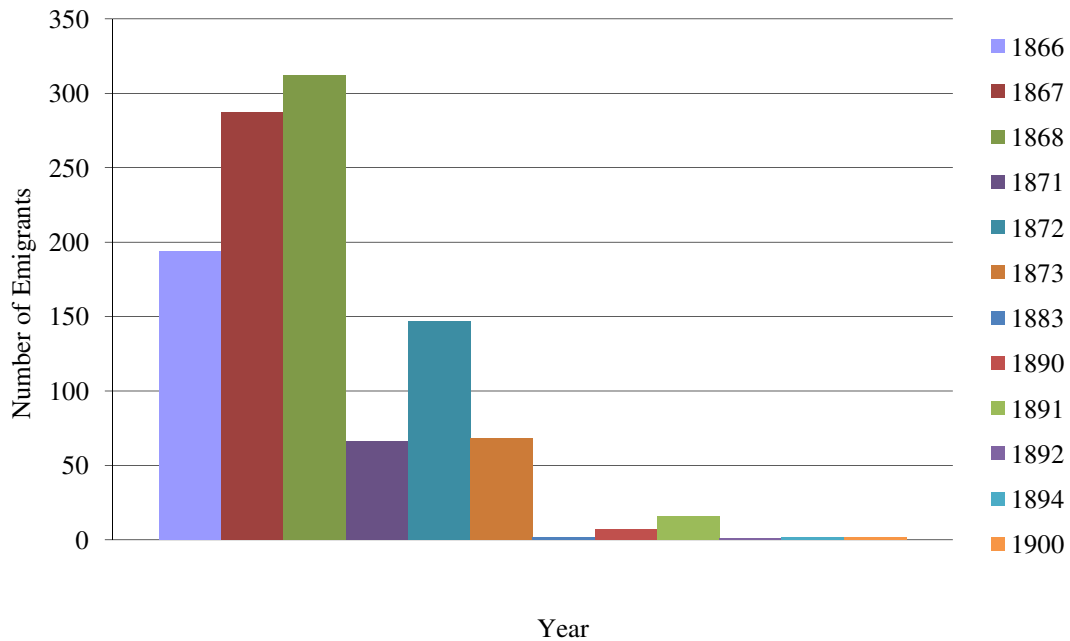


Figure 15. Emigration Expeditions from Georgia to Liberia

Macon blacks organized a Liberian emigration committee in 1866 and wrote Secretary McClain that they were “sick of affairs,” in the city and the unprovoked prejudice they suffered daily. The group was determined to, “leave this continent for the Republic of Liberia,” and to rid themselves of, “the chains that binds us from being what other men are.”⁹⁶ Future bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and separatist advocate, Henry M. Turner could not realize his political aspirations in Macon. He was expelled twice from the legislature, once in 1868 and again in 1870, while serving for Macon. He once was forced to defend his residence from armed white assailants when he tried to take his rightful place. The intimidation of the KKK was

⁹⁶ Wyatt Moore and Moses Bullock to William McClain, Macon, Georgia, 5 July 1866, ACS, LOC; President Wyatt Moore and Moses Bullock to Reverend William McClain, Macon, Georgia, 13 July, 1866, ACS, LOC.

widespread and the terrorist organization actively targeted blacks involved in independent political and economic activity. A white resident of Georgia testified in a Congressional hearing investigating racial conditions in the South that in the seven months prior to the 1868 expulsion, whites had murdered blacks throughout the state at a rate of 17 per month and that number rose to about 47 per month after 1868. Whites murdered Abram Turner, a black legislature from Putnam County, near Baldwin and Hancock Counties, the same year that he was elected. Emigration movements emerged in both Baldwin and Hancock Counties during this period.⁹⁷

The dismantling of black civil rights in Georgia was quickly followed by extreme repression and violence by whites, conditions that motivated many blacks in the state to advocate separatism by the end of the 1860s and early 1870s. The acquisition of political rights in the United States did not induce E. M. Pendleton of Hancock County to stay in the country. Although some separatist had become more optimistic about the opportunity for freedom in the U.S. since recent enfranchisement, Pendleton was unmoved, commenting, “Quite a number have backed down owing to political influence but other take their places... I doubt not you will have thousands apply before autumn, as by that time they will find that there is no money nor clothes in voting.” Perhaps Pendleton was more moved by the state’s record of racial violence. In nearby Richmond County fifty-three freedmen in Augusta had been murdered, when thirty black residents left for Liberia in 1868. Most of the participants were from the lower class. In addition to farmers, several shoemakers, blacksmiths, brick layers, seamstresses, barbers, and pressmen had all been recruited into the movement.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Andrew M. Manis, *Macon Black and White, An Unutterable Separation in the American Century* (Macon: Macon University Press, 2004), 16-19; Donald L. Grant, *The Way It Was in the South, the Black Experience in Georgia* (New York: Birch Lane Press Book, 1993), 97-136.

⁹⁸ E. M. Pendleton to William Coppinger, Sparta, Georgia, 11 April 1868, ACS, LOC; Lloyd P. Terrell, *Blacks in Augusta, a Chronology, 1741-1977* (Augusta: Preston Publications, 1977), 7; R. Campbell to William Coppinger, Augusta, Georgia, 21 April 1868, ACS, LOC; “List of Emigrants For Liberia,” *The African Repository* 46 no. 6 (June 1868): 173.

Philip Monroe was a painter by trade and a local separatist leader in Columbus. He had been working with local judicial officials to attract support for the movement. Judge Cook, a local judge, wrote that the, “people is so scattered about the country trying to make something,” in order to prepare for departure that year.⁹⁹ Frank Simpson thought that black residents who felt optimistic by the recent favorable political were, “badly mistaken,” and would, “never get their rights in this country.” Hardened by the political violence, he thought that blacks would, “see trouble before they got through,” and that no matter what they, “will always be in the rear of the white man because this is his country.”¹⁰⁰

The large emigration movements in Columbus in western Georgia spawned emigration movements in Eufaula in east Alabama. The two movements in Eufaula and Columbus shared local conditions most notably acute violence against blacks in association with the rise of political activity. In Columbus, Ariminita C. Brooks expected to get about 40 or 50 emigrants from Pike County, Alabama to participate in the 1867 movement. The two movements often referenced and worked in conjunction with one another. In 1868, they jointly petitioned the United States Senate as “the colored citizens of Georgia and Alabama,” and wanted to emigrate because of, “the animosity evinced towards us as a people, and the injustice and oppression to which we are obliged to submit.”¹⁰¹

Support for separatism in Alabama occurred on a smaller scale than in states like Georgia or Arkansas. Throughout the post-war period mostly small groups of blacks emigrated to Liberia or the Midwest. Peter Kolchin believes that Alabama blacks simply emigrated to other close or

⁹⁹ Philip S. Monroe to Secretary William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 3 March 1868 ACS, LOC; Judge Cook to William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 7 April 1868, ACS, LOC.

¹⁰⁰ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 16 March 1867, ACS, LOC; Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 3 April 1867, ACS, LOC.

¹⁰¹ A. C. Brooks to William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 17 May 1867, ACS, LOC; “Petitions from Colored People,” *The African Repository* 48 no. 8 (August 1868): 237.

neighboring states.¹⁰² The economic collapse after the Civil War in Alabama was not as devastating as in other regions in the South. Labor was in high demand and during Reconstruction labor recruiters actively searched nearby states for black laborers willing to migrate to Alabama. Violence and political repression facilitated the small number of emigration movements that did take place in Alabama. Kolchin contends that “White violence and intimidation were probably greater factors than was economic incentive in causing the departure of the few Negroes who did leave Alabama, where the demand for labor consistently outran the supply.”¹⁰³ Beginning in 1874, black political power in the state began to dissipate, declining rapidly in 1876 and ending completely by 1878. While some intra-party factionalism and redistricted municipalities may account for the decreased number of black voters, as was in Georgia, most were driven from the polls by whites using intimidation, violence, and the threat of economic reprisals.¹⁰⁴

However, for some black Alabamians the decision to participate in the 1879 Exodus was also influenced by economic change. For example one black Alabama resident commented that “Republicans were completely hedged in society, politically and financially.” B. R. Thomas saw the landlords’ economic exploitation of the freedmen first-hand writing that, “a few of the toiling thousand are permitted to lay up a dollar from his hard years toil owing to the downright swindling of his landlord and master.” Thomas’ experiences caused him to have a negative outlook on the future prospects of race relations and improving economic conditions for blacks. He wrote that,

the more helpless and ignorant colored people who submit more readily to oppression and who aspire to nothing higher than slavery fare better, but the better class of colored people who have higher aspirations

¹⁰² Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom, The Responses of Alabama’s Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), 21.

¹⁰³ Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 21-22.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers Nor Scalawags, Black Officeholders during the Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867-1878* (Montgomery: Richard Bailey Publishers, 1993), 231-241.

find the South a hard road to travel the criminal code of our own state so framed that is a mere question of times when $\frac{3}{4}$ of the colored people will be remanded to a condition worse than slavery.

Despite Thomas' characterization not all whites were in opposition to black self determination and interracial cooperation within black separatist movements was common. Even Thomas confided in a white route agent, John A. Thomas, whom he trusted with the mail and who would, "hand it to me without risk to personal safety."¹⁰⁵

In Green County, black separatist supporters requested the aid of a local and trusted white associate, Winfield Bird, when writing to Governor St. John for information. Bird wrote the governor that the county's black residents wanted him, "as a native Southerner and Republican possessing their native confidence," to speak to them directly about Kansas.¹⁰⁶ Green County's black residents had just cause for seeking the aid of a local white man to help them in their cause. In 1870, during a Republican campaign rally in Eutaw, four blacks were killed and 54 wounded, during an assault by white residents.¹⁰⁷

The cooperation between black separatists and white sympathizers in the South does not negate the movement's radical nature, but attests to the strained conditions under which black activists had no choice but to operate. Because of these strained conditions rural blacks and those from the piedmont and black belt areas in central Alabama tended to be more politically radical than their black counterparts from north Alabama who advocated integration more vigorously. However, these sections of the state also had their share of separatist activists.

Citizens from Athens located in the northern Tennessee Valley portion of the state, held a meeting on May 31st 1879 to discuss Kansas' land and schools. Blacks from neighboring Florence moved to Kansas, in part because of the lack of protection from racial violence. Willie

¹⁰⁵ B. R. Thomas to Governor John St. John, Alabama, 20 September 1879.

¹⁰⁶ Winfield S. Bird to Governor John St. John, Eutaw, Greene County, Alabama, 20 September 1879, NEP, KSHS.

¹⁰⁷ Melinda Hennessey, "Political Turmoil in the Black Belt," *Alabama Review* (1980): 35-48.

Byers, a mechanic from Sawyerville in the west-central part of the state reported that many area farmers wanted to go to Kansas. The number of blacks emigrating from Alabama to Kansas however was small, less than 1,000 in 1880.¹⁰⁸

Like the Exodus movement, the size of black emigration from Alabama to Liberia was also limited. During the emigration movements to Liberia in 1868, a few dozen emigrants did leave Alabama, comprising two different groups. (See Table 12 and Figure 12) The Eufaula, Barbour County movement was positively affected by the separatist movement in Columbus, Marion and Muscogee Counties. Several letters to the ACS from black Georgians discussed the 1868 movement to Liberia in nearby counties in Alabama. In 1867, Willis Fort of Eufaula reported to Secretary McClain that he was able to raise some 300 hundred emigrants for departure next year.

¹⁰⁸ Kolchin, 170; Richard Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers Nor Scalawags*, 146-147; J. H. Thomason to Governor John St. John, Athens, Alabama, 21 May 1879, NEP, KSHS; William Cohen, *At Freedom's Edge, Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Racial Control* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 170; Willie Byers to Governor John St. John, Sawyerville, Alabama, 20 August 1879.

Table 12. Emigration Expeditions from Alabama to Liberia

Year	Number of Emigrants	Town/City	County
1868	38	Eufaula	Barbour
1868	11	Mobile	Mobile
1881	7	Montgomery	Montgomery
1883	12	Montgomery	Montgomery
1885	6	Selma	Dallas
1891	15	Shiloh	Marengo
1902	1	Normal	Madison

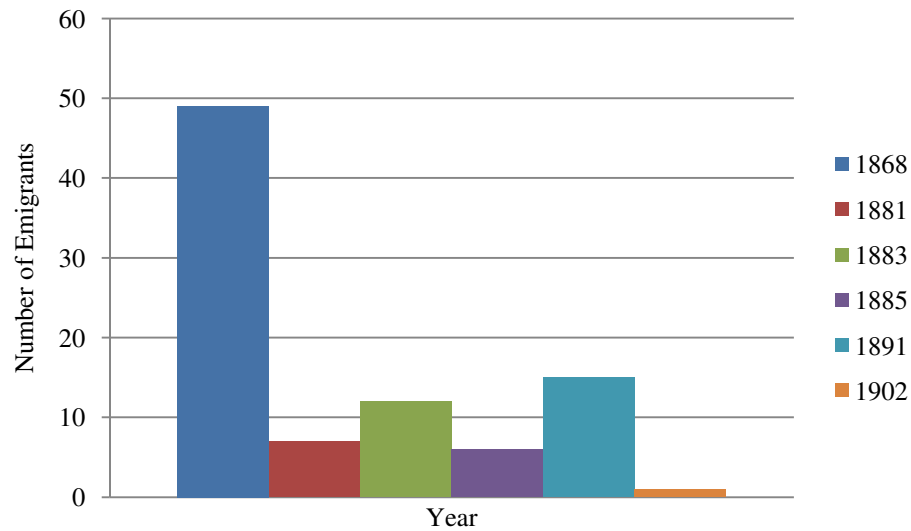


Figure 12. Emigration Expeditions from Alabama to Liberia

Eufaula had a diverse class of blacks as represented by the skilled carpenters, brick masons, and black smiths listed as being interested in the movement by Fort. He also claimed potential emigrants who were competent enough to teach school or keep books along with

farmers and various kinds of mechanics. In January, Fort and another organizer, A. Graves, declared that they were, “still desirous to leave for Liberia and are still desiring to leave day after day as we have no other refuge.”¹⁰⁹ Fort and Graves worked in association with two other local recruiters, A. E. Williams and W. H. Rhodes, who wrote to the ACS. They reported a far smaller number, fifty individuals who were preparing to emigrate in February.¹¹⁰ The leaders agreed that a “secret society the K. K. K.,” were committing atrocities and that, “everybody wants to leave this county.”¹¹¹

By 1870 the Ku Klux Klan was particularly active in the counties with large numbers of black voters, especially during the presidential election of 1868. In the counties of Sumter, Hale, Tuscaloosa, and Greene, numerous accounts of murder, lynchings, and other acts of violence were recorded, mostly surrounding the political activity of black and white Republicans.¹¹² Here again, violence was not an isolated event, but usually occurred with changes in political power. In 1873 Eufaula, whites killed 100 blacks during an election-day riot.¹¹³

Parts of south-western Alabama were also susceptible to the racial violence plaguing Georgia during this period. Although leaders in 1868 Eufaula were in agreement about leaving, some internal organizational problems did exist. Leaders disagreed about details such as a spring or fall departure, with Williams and Rhodes going so far as to disassociate themselves from Fort completely after Fort insisted on a fall to depart. Transportation problems also resulted from the lack of finances, with leaders, like those from other impoverished communities, writing the U. S. Congress for financial support. In the end, the company left that spring, surprisingly, without

¹⁰⁹ Willis Fort to Rev. William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 28 November 1867, ACS, LOC; Willis Fort and A. Graves to Rev. William McClain, , Eufaula, Alabama, 30 January 1868, ACS, LOC.

¹¹⁰ A. E. Williams and W. H. Rhodes to William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 20 February 1868, ACS, LOC; The actual number of emigrants from Eufaula was 38.

¹¹¹ A. E. Williams, Willis Fort, and W. H. Rhodes to. William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 18 April 1868, ACS, LOC.

¹¹² Bailey, 169-170; Kolchin, 170; This event did not result in an emigration movement to Liberia.

¹¹³ Bailey, 209.

Williams, who cited personal family conflicts for not departing. Despite this set-back, the group's departure influenced others to consider leaving. In May 1868, A. Sweeney, of the Freedmen's Bureau, wrote Secretary Coppinger requesting circulars, because of the large number of people in the area desiring to emigrate. Black interest in separatism continued for over a decade; as late as 1880, potential emigrants from the area were still writing the ACS about Fort's success as a member of the Liberian legislature.¹¹⁴

Potential emigrants in Mobile also thought it would be beneficial to work with Freedman's Bureau agents. Some officials in the Bureau were also movement sympathizers or colonizationists. The group of Mobile emigrants sought the assistance of James Gillette, Assistant Sub-Commissioner, in writing to Secretary Coppinger. The group consisted of twelve families and individuals who, like the Eufaula emigrants, ranged in occupations from preachers and undertakers to tailors, carpenters, mechanists, and farmers.¹¹⁵ One of them was George Fearo, who was almost 60 years old when he wrote the Society as a potential emigrant. Fearo was an undertaker and worked in the Baptist church. He wanted to be sent out first, before any other potential Mobile emigrants in order to survey conditions and report back. If this were done, Fearo believed he could recruit hundreds or even thousands of participants throughout the interior of Alabama. He wrote Coppinger explaining that he had, "always been an advocate of the society and have a great many friends as well in Tuscaloosa and Columbus GA. In the latter place I had a great many friends who have gone to Liberia. Therefore I will not be a stranger there." He went on to declare that a few persons who left, "thought that the inhabitants would

¹¹⁴ A. E. Williams, W. Rhodes, and A. Graves to William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 10 March 1868, ACS, LOC; A. E. Williams, Willis Fort, and William Rhodes to William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 18 April 1868, ACS, LOC; A. E. Williams to William McClain, Eufaula, Alabama, 10 April 1868, ACS, LOC; A. Sweeney to William Coppinger, Eufaula, Alabama, 20 May 1868, ACS, LOC; J. H. Rhoe to William Coppinger, Eufaula, Alabama, 6 February 1880, ACS, LOC.

¹¹⁵ James Gillette to William Coppinger, Mobile, Alabama, 2 March 1868, ACS, LOC.

carry them around on their shoulders,” while others reported, “a gloomy account of affairs, which set us back considerably here.”¹¹⁶

Although a little embellished, Fearo realized that he might be able to recruit more participants if he were able to visit Liberia first and bring back a positive report to share with others. His statement makes reference to a consecutive movement pattern, one in which a small number of emigrants who were followed the next year by a larger number of emigrants the next year from the same area.¹¹⁷

In Mobile, work with the Freedman’s Bureau proved invaluable, as black emigrants encountered transportation problems surrounding their departure. Captain Gillett interceded on behalf of the emigrants with railroad agents and approved the U. S. transportation orders to transport John Stewart, a Mobile county farmer, along with nineteen other adults and four children to Savannah, Georgia, where they were to board a ship to Liberia.¹¹⁸ On April 23, 1868, Stewart along with eight other adults and one child left for Savannah and from there on to Liberia. It seems that transportation problems and physical threats prompted as many as two-thirds of the potential emigrants to decide not to go at the last minute. While waiting at the wharf in Mobile, Gillet reported that, “great influence was exerted by a number of gentleman to prevent their departure.” In spite of these repressive measures, he continued his support for the emigrants’ cause writing that any further participants who desired to go would have transportation provided to them for free.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ George Fearo to William Coppinger, 18 March 1868, Mobile, Alabama, ACS, LOC.

¹¹⁷ In Montgomery seven emigrants left in 1881 and were followed by twelve in 1883; The reverse was also possible with a large group being followed by a smaller number sometime later.

¹¹⁸ James Gillette to William Coppinger, 16 April 1868, Mobile, Alabama, ACS, LOC; Gillette reports the order numbers as 49509, 49570, 49511, and 49512.

¹¹⁹ James Gillette to William Coppinger, Mobile, Alabama, 25 April 1868, ACS, LOC.

Smaller groups of emigrants from Alabama's black belt continued to leave the state throughout the 1890s. Writing of his family in 1884, a black father from Mobile wanted to emigrate, "... as soon as possible, especially so that they may receive a good education, and also live well and prosper," something he thought was impossible for his family to achieve in the U.S. As late as 1895 blacks in Birmingham were still interested in separatism and participated in the International Migration Society partly organized by Bishop Henry McNeal Turner.¹²⁰ While black southerners could withstand political or economic discrimination to some extent, living in a constant state of fear and terror made life unbearable.

For these reasons some of Selma's black residents organized the Dallas County Emigration Society and eventually emigrated in 1885. The horrors of racial violence brought disruptions to daily life, which continued to generate interest in leaving with one potential emigrant, commenting, "a person might know or learn every Education here and or here in the South it would not be of any count to a colored person fore when ignorance and opposition are some what like thunder bolts and flashing lightenigs ... the terror of their so torment my pen hardly can work now."¹²¹ Dozens of blacks left Alabama in small groups for Liberia during the 1880s and 1890s, but the political disruptions and terror that resulted in the large movement in the 1860s were far less frequent. Although the movements in Alabama are comparatively smaller than separatist movements from other states, the circumstances surrounding when black Alabamians chose to leave are very similar to those experienced by other black separatists throughout the South.

Local conditions had the greatest impact on the emergence of separatist movements in southern states. Although occurring at different times and places, all southern black separatist

¹²⁰ Charles Henry Myatt to William Coppinger, 29 July 1872, Selma, Alabama, ACS, LOC; "Sixty-Seventh Annual Report of the American Colonization Society," *African Repository* 60 (April 1884): 33; Redkey, 195-232.

¹²¹ John B. Blevins to William Coppinger, East Selma, Selma, Alabama, 24 February 1880, ACS, LOC.

movements were initiated after severe changes in economic or political conditions and/or a dramatic increase in racial violence. At times, movements also diffused into neighboring areas affected by similar conditions and worked to inspire similar interests. Separatist movements emerged through the rapid convergence of violence along with political or economic injustice. Only after experiencing periods of extreme disorder, did blacks uproot themselves and leave the South in search of greater liberty and land.

The cases examined in this chapter illustrate trends in separatist movement emergence and are not intended to be the only definitive depiction. Personal whims, familial attachments, or amount of savings, are just a few factors that could influence a potential emigrant's decision to leave. This study does not attempt to identify every such possible influence, but rather seeks to present a cohesive explanation regarding the timing and place of separatist movements in general. The use of social movement theory to compare the spatial and temporal components of movement emergence throughout the South reveal generalities and offer researchers analysis beyond the idiosyncratic experiences of participants. Just as the study of the black southern separatist movement emergence can benefit from the incorporation of social theory, so too can the study of movement structure also benefit from informed social inquiry.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURE OF POST WAR MOVEMENTS

It was the third day of testimony in Washington D.C. and the much publicized Exoduster Movement from the South was the talk of Capitol Hill. The national media had been investigating the movement for several years. Senators introduced questions charging manipulation on the part of movement organizers early during the session. Committee Chairman, Senator Daniel Voorhees, sharply questioned Alexander Cromwell, a movement participant:

Now Mr. Cromwell, you are an intelligent man of your race, and have mingled considerably with others of your race; now please state to the committee what is the scope and purpose of this emigration movement; does it embrace the entire colored population of the South, with a design to transport them elsewhere, or does it embrace only a part, and, if so, how large a part?¹

Cromwell defended the Exodusters, stating, "There is no movement, except in so far as it is entered into by persons, independently of each other, in their respective localities. No colored man and no number of colored men could ever have originated this movement. It was spontaneous, so far as its origin was concerned."² Cromwell denied the existence of a national emigration movement in order to refute detractors who claimed the Exoduster Movement was more or less organized by opportunists. He accurately reported, however, that blacks from diverse communities participated in the Exoduster Movement by organizing local emigration movements and were driven by local conditions.

¹ *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States*, 13.

² *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States*, 13.

After the Civil War southern blacks worked to realize goals of land ownership and self-determination by organizing independent emigration movements as well as collaborating with white colonization groups. In order to realize their goals, black southerners had to navigate an oppressive racial climate. This chapter will examine the structure of postwar emigration movements operating under such precarious conditions and the unique experiences of those who participated.

While some blacks viewed separatism as defeatist positions, many black southerners viewed the philosophies as a means of improving their lives. Blacks became empowered by forming independent institutions and facilities separate from whites. They achieved greater autonomy by managing all black churches, schools, and businesses than could not have been achieved through participation in an institution dominated by whites.³ Because of segregation, southern blacks freely made organizational decisions independent of white control regarding basic issues such as wages, pedagogy, and/or hours of operation. Racial separateness also provided an outlet for black leadership. Black institutions actively sought black teachers, doctors, and other professionals, while white institutions discriminated against them. Contemporary black journalist T. Thomas Fortune wrote, “Colored people are like white people. When they see nothing but white ministers in the white churches they conclude that it is best to have nothing but colored ministers in their own pulpits, and they are perfectly consistent and logical in their conclusion.” Although often not as wealthy as whites, after the Civil War blacks developed cultural resources in the form of black churches, colleges, and activist organizations that nonetheless empowered their communities and provided opportunities to exercise power.⁴

³ C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 365-366.

⁴ T. Thomas Fortune, *Black and White: Land, Labor, and Politics in the South* (New York: Fords, Howard, and Hulbert, 1884), 69-70; Lerone Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America* 6th edition. (New

Because of the South's repressive environment and the perceived benefits of segregation, some blacks viewed separatism optimistically and not as impediments to black empowerment.

Participants in separatist movements in the South came from all social classes, however the majority of supporters were from the middle and lower class.⁵ Many of the vast majorities of potential emigrants who wrote the ACS or who actually emigrated were impoverished ex-slaves, sharecroppers, skilled and unskilled artisans or laborers, or poor free black farmers. In general, southern blacks "owned no lands, houses, banks, stores, live stock or wealth. Not only was it the distinctly laboring class but the distinctly pauper class."⁶ Black economic aspirations for advancement were devastated after the Civil War when the government reneged on promises of land ownership for ex slaves, resulting in subsistence farming and sharecropping arrangements for many black southerners. Although many blacks were field laborers, many possessed skills such as bricklaying, blacksmithing, and even engineering. But as a cohort, the group generally remained part of the lower laboring classes in the South.⁷

The blending of both agricultural and industrial forms of labor in the South complicates class distinctions. Southern blacks were not entirely a peasant or a proletariat class, but combined elements of both labor groups. Peasant/proletariat societies can exist when laborers reside in agricultural based economies that utilize technologically advanced modes of production such as wage labor or sharecropping systems and simultaneously engage in independent subsistence farming.⁸ The mass of participants in postwar emigration movements were a part of

York: Penguin Books, 1993), 286-290. McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*, 96-108.

⁵ Redkey, 5; Hahn, 324-325.

⁶ W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935), 598.

⁷ Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba after Slavery* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 38; Fortune, *Black and White: Land, Labor, and Politics in the South*, 73-74, 192, 204.

⁸ Richard Furcht, "A Caribbean Society: Neither peasant nor Proletariat," in *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean: An Anthropological Reader* Michael M. Horowitz, ed. (Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press, 1971);

the proto peasantry or the evolving proletariat in southern society and together formed the black lower class.

Separatism was most popular among lower class blacks, but also had supporters from the black upper class. Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the A. M. E. Church, for instance, related to the distresses of poor southern blacks, particularly the frustrations of farmers. Although Turner showed a cultural affinity towards Africa and strongly supported emigration to Liberia, he also supported the Exoduster Movement.⁹ He was born free in South Carolina and lived many years in Georgia and Louisiana where he shared a common experience of racial injustice with the masses of black southerners. Turner's positive opinion of emigration is an exception among black leaders in the late nineteenth century. Northern black politicians were not as radical as their southern brethren and did not formulate a strategy to address the economic needs of the black masses living in the South.¹⁰ In Louisiana, one farmer complained about his plight and that of other black residents,

We have been forced by a combination to rent land at from \$8.00 or \$10.00 per acre and from \$3.00 to \$4.00 for each and every 4lbs. bale of cotton as ginned, baled, and forced to deal with our employer under the impression of exorbitant rates for everything we use and that is no more than salt pork and corn meal and the terms of the affairs is always in such condition that we never gets the money to live.¹¹

Philosophies of racial uplift and the civilizing mission were not relevant to the everyday problems facing black southerners. Southern separatists were motivated by the inability to practice self-determination in the South. The choice of some blacks to leave the South, and in

Furcht examines British Guiana in the 1830s following slave emancipation and finds that peasant-like means of productions, including cultivation of small plots of land, traditional technology, and the use of household labor, can exist along with proletariat relations of production, based on the sale of labor paid in wages or through systems of sharecropping, farming out, or labor emigration.

⁹ Stephen Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African-American Religion in the South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 134-138.

¹⁰ Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African-American Religion in the South*, 133; Foner, *Reconstruction, America's Unfinished Revolution*, 472.

¹¹ J. A. Wilson to Governor John St. John, New Providence, LA, 16 July 1879, NEP, KSHS.

some cases the United States, reflected a determination primarily to achieve basic freedoms denied by whites.

Lower class blacks supported separatism because of empirical conditions affecting their livelihoods and were less inspired by the cultural rhetoric of Black Nationalism. A small number of black educators and missionaries left the U.S. for philanthropic reasons, but often only temporarily.¹² These endeavors were usually undertaken for personal reasons and were not initiated as part of an emigration movement. Unlike many lower class black southerners, a significant amount of separatist support cannot be found among the black professional classes.¹³

Towards the end of the nineteenth century an increasing number of black professionals sent applications to the ACS. Before the 1880s, the society was less selective in who it accepted as emigrants, preferring those with agricultural experience, although basically accepting a range of occupational types. However, as funds decreased and applications from freedmen increased, the ACS began to seek individuals who could afford to pay their own passage, held professional occupations such as doctors, teachers, and ministers, or who were generally well off financially. Liberia became a country where black professionals could achieve the national recognition, wealth, and prestige never available to them in the United States, but continually emphasized in American culture. Like the black lower class, upper class blacks also sought greater opportunity in choosing to emigrate. In St. Mary's Parish, Louisiana Judge James Doplary wanted to emigrate to Kansas along with 10 or 20 other local families.¹⁴ These examples of separatist support among upper class blacks were, however, exceptional.

¹² Walter Williams, *Black Americans and the Evangelization of Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 184-190, Walter Williams, "The Missionary: Introduction," in *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa* Sylvia Jacobs, Editor, Pgs: 131-134, (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1982), 131-132.

¹³ George Brown Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1952), 157-58.

¹⁴ Mitchell, 58-59; African emigration was an avenue to achieve greater social mobility for other upper class blacks in the Diaspora such as elite Afro-Barbadians, who also experienced racial discrimination at home, Melanie J.

Along with poor blacks, some of the participants in the movement to Kansas were members of the black middle class. A reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* observed that “the exodus has not been such a pall-mall hurly burly movement as has been commonly supposed.” Instead the reporter noted, “the leading emigrants were all moneyed men. In Concordia, opposite Natchez, the men who were most determined to go had houses, stock, and poultry, and disposed of all their prosperity at a nominal sum.”¹⁵ The description of “money men” resembles circumstances of a black middle class. The majority of black separatists were either poor or lower middle class and jointly formed the black lower class in the South. Fabius Peters, Secretary of the Colored Emigration Society, wrote Governor St. John of Kansas on behalf of the residents of St. Charles Parish, Louisiana, inquiring about the state’s agricultural resources. Peters asked about cotton, sugar cane, and rice, stating that they were “accustomed to raise these produce.” Others wrote the Governor regarding the price of land and the demand for labor.¹⁶ Peters and other potential emigrants were most concerned with maintaining a livelihood once arriving in a new settlement. Most intended to continue their work as farmers or laborers and sought the opportunity to independently practice their trade.

Although lower class participants made up the majority of those who left in the South, in large the movement was not based upon class ideologies. Class status composed part of the black separatist identity, however ethnic identity was a far more salient organizing factor. While many black separatists centered their ideology on class related goals, their identity was not a consequence of their class position. Instead they organized on the basis of racial exploitation

Newton, *The Children of Africa in the Colonies: Free People of Color in Barbados in the Age of Emancipation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 201; James Doplary to Governor John St. John, St. Mary’s Parish, LA, 15 July 1879, NEP, KSHS.

¹⁵ “At Talk with Refugees from Atchinson to the Causes that Provoked the Migration,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 17 May 1880, NEP, KSHS.

¹⁶ Fabius P. Peters to Governor John St. John, St. Charles Parish, LA, 12 July 1879, NEP, KSHS; A. H. Lemont to Governor John St. John, Shreveport, LA, 3 July 1879, NEP, KSHS.

that was manifested in economic, social, and political practices. Thus while emigration movement participants shared similar economic status, their collective identity was centered primarily on race and not class.

Black separatists were capitalists and simply wanted the opportunity to exploit land and labor, as did their white American counterparts. Contemporary black leader, W. E. B. Du Bois attributes the failure of populism and other class based social movements in the South in part to the ambition on the part of the lower and middle classes to aspire to and align with the upper classes.¹⁷ Black separatists espoused capitalist ideologies, which once in Africa manifested themselves in the Americo-Liberian exploitation of the indigenous labor force, further attesting to the movement's conservative American economic ethos and the absence of a radical class based ideology despite a large lower class aggregate.

When examining the foundations of Black Nationalism and identity researchers focus too narrowly on national leaders without regard to the popularity of these ideas.¹⁸ Although calls for black solidarity, collective identity, and opportunities for improvement are found in the writings of black separatist leaders such as Edward Blyden, Alexander Crummell, and Martin Delany, such philosophies can also be found in the writings of southern farmers or artisans contemplating emigration.

Black Nationalism mirrors American nationalism in its prizing of capitalism.¹⁹ American middle class values of industry and economy were the most commonly referenced goals in black separatist movements. Even more so than concepts of Christian evangelism or racial superiority, American capitalism was the most influential ideology in southern black separatism.

¹⁷ Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 608-609.

¹⁸ Tommie Shelby, "Foundations of Black Solidarity: Collective Identity or Common Oppression," *Ethics* 112 (January 2002): 232, 238.

¹⁹ Adeleke, 2-3.

Capitalism's central position in the black separatist movements attests to its participants' internment of American values.

Information diffusion is a critical component of social movement participation. When considering the black lower class, issues regarding information diffusion are especially relevant, because of the scarcity of fundamental resources such as literacy and wealth.²⁰ Potential emigrants sought assistance from trusted acquaintances or groups in order to counter such deficiencies. Henry Smith of Marshall, Texas writes, "I am in hopes that you will write as soon as you receive this letter and give me all the advice you can that I may comfort and gladden the hearts of the people."²¹ Lower class blacks utilized resources collectively in order to spread information about and gain support for local separatist movements.

The *African Repository* provided blacks with news about Liberia as well as colonization and emigration movements to Africa. Information was shared with others and generally worked to promote interpersonal contact in association with the separatist cause. One Murfreesboro, Tennessee man wrote,

Your repository of this month has made its appearances giving me full particulars of the proceeding of newly elective officers of the Republic of Liberia and the address of President Roye made at Monrovia the capitol Jan the 3rd. I have read to much interest his address and have read it to hundreds of my fellow subjects who were quite anxious to hear of the welfare of Liberia.²²

Although some blacks were illiterate and poor, and thus restricted in their participation in the movement, those blacks who could read or could afford to purchase the *African Repository* shared information with other sympathizers in the community.

²⁰ Mitchell, 39; Levy-Storms finds that interpersonal contact was the most useful method to disseminate information promoting healthy changes in behavior, Len Levy-Storms, "Strategies for Diffusing Public Health Innovations through Older Adults Health Communication Networks," *Generations* 29 (Summer 2005): 70-75, 71-72; Organizational channels and the news media were the most influential methods for orchestrating protest and disseminating information; Kenneth Andrews and Michael Biggs, "Dynamics of Protest Diffusion: Movement Organizations, Social Networks, and News Media in the 1960s Sit-ins," *American Sociological Review* 71 (October 2006): 752-777, 753.

²¹ Rev. Henry Smith to Governor John P. St. John, 7 May 1879, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, NEP, KSHS.

²² S.S. Stewart to William Coppinger, Murfreesboro, TN, 11 April 1870, ACS, LOC.

When questioned at the Senate hearings about the impact of the Exodus movement in North Carolina and whether it was an isolated incident or representative of a growing trend, O. S. B. Wall, a black lawyer from Washington D. C. and President of the National Emigration Aid Association, commented about the importance of diffusion, responding, “It may not be an extensive movement in North Carolina, but as soon as the masses in North Carolina and the people there generally learn of the success of their friends I think they will be influenced just as other people are and that in time it will become a general movement.”²³

Individual recruiters, often working in association with or on behalf of a larger separatist organization, were able to relay movement successes and encourage others with positive firsthand accounts. In some cases, a small group of emigrants would leave prior to an expedition by a large group. A recruiter in Warren County, North Carolina instructed Secretary Coppinger, “Please inform me if your society will send two delegates from our county to Liberia to return and report the condition of that country to us or will your society aid us in sending them?” Likewise the lack of a positive report could detour potential movement supporters. Black residents in Currituck County waited to hear back from their friends and family, who had already emigrated, before leaving for Liberia themselves. Participants explained to Secretary Coppinger, “the emigrants that left Currituck June the 30th 1879 Promas to Wright to their Relation back here. they fere and believe that they never go to Liberia.”²⁴

When potential emigrants corresponded officially with movement agents or organizations, it was often in association with or on the behalf of other sympathizers. Because a large number of blacks in the South were illiterate after slavery, an active and supportive

²³ *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States*, 44.

²⁴ Solomon Young to William Coppinger, Warrenton, Warren County, North Carolina, 9 July 1880, ACS, LOC; B. H. Sears to William Coppinger, Indian Ridge, North Carolina, 18 August 1880, ACS, LOC.

network of sympathizers and agents was necessary for movement growth.²⁵ S. H.B. Schoomaker was delegated to write Governor John St. John of Kansas on behalf of a number of blacks in Baton Rouge, Louisiana who were interested in migration. All of the potential migrants were from the same parish and wanted to obtain more information on Kansas from a reliable source.²⁶ Separatist shared information on the movement through interpersonal channels, thus an active network of supporters was vital to the progression of black territorial separatism in the South. Movement supporters' strategic use of sharing resources compensated for individual deficiencies and helped diffuse information as well as mobilize mass participation.

Participants can be recruited into social movements by previously established lines of interaction, involving familiar indigenous organizations or people in a community.²⁷ During the territorial separatist movements occurring shortly after the Civil War, southern blacks were initially recruited through familial, religious, and communal channels. The decision to emigrate was usually not taken individually, but involved a network of relatives, clergy, and neighbors in support of the cause. When separatism was introduced along these avenues, potential participants were less skeptical, because of a shared trust incurred through membership within these associations.

The family is the most basic social group in any society and familial involvement during southern black separatist movements is the most fundamental group in regard to participation. Entire black families, and not disconnected individuals, relocated out of the South in order to improve their condition and livelihood. Maintaining supportive social connections was vastly

²⁵ Mitchell, 39.

²⁶ S. H. B. Schoomaker to Gov. John St. John, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

²⁷ McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 43-44; Established associational networks help facilitate contact between potential and actual movement participants. Charles Bolton, "Alienation and Action: A Story of Peace Group Members," *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 78 no. 3 (November 1972): 537-561, 57-58. Bolton finds that although socio-psychological factors such as alienation and degree of radicalism are influential to movement participation, many are recruited through interpersonal networks.

important to blacks emigrating or migrating out of the South. As one potential emigrant serving as representative of the Missionary Baptist and Sunday School Convention in Georgia wrote,

There are about one dozen colored families in this city and vicinity who wish to move west. They prefer Kansas. I write, being one of the number to ask that you send me such information as you can, in reference to the governments land. We would like to settle if possible in one neighborhood, that is we want to set up homesteads adjoining one another.²⁸

During the Exoduster Movement of the late 1870s and early 1880s, which saw the migration of thousands of Southern blacks to areas in Kansas, Arkansas and Indiana, newspapers across the country were filled with information regarding the new settlers. The presence of black families was extremely important to the sustainability of a given community. Communities without permanent male and female residents would cease to proliferate within a number of years, however besides offering practical help in resettling, black families also offered an invaluable degree of sentimental support to one another. Supports from strong interpersonal connections such as families are highly predictive of movement participation.²⁹ At times indiscriminately, separated during slavery, black families would have been especially reluctant to sever emotional and physical ties after emancipation, even if it meant experiencing life in a less hostile region.

In North Carolina, C. H. Bennett wanted to immigrate to Liberia in order to see his father and mother who left in May 1879. B. F. McDowell of Charlotte, had not seen his Father, who had immigrated to Liberia, in almost ten years, but after receiving a letter from his Father in the spring of 1870, McDowell was fully willing to immigrate to the small African country. Writing to Coppinger, McDowell recounts, "I got a letter from him about four weeks ago and he wants me to either come in the fall or send him a letter on the next voyage. Or if you put me on any

²⁸ William J. White to Governor John St. John, Augusta, Georgia, 24 June 1879, NEP, KSHS.

²⁹ Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Specifying the Relationships Between Social Ties and Activism," *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 99 no. 3 (November 1993): 640-667, 652-654; Kenneth Wilson and Anthony Orum, "Mobilizing People for Collective Political Action," *Journal of Military and Political Sociology* vol. 4 no. 2 (Fall 1976): 187-202, 198.

plan to get there, I will be under many obligations to you.”³⁰ Although families are extremely important to black separatist movement, they are only one component of the interpersonal networks needed to facilitate movement participation.

The church is a hallmark of the black community and has served as a communal center for a variety of both secular and spiritual interactions. The existence of a reticulate organization such as a church involves significant personal contact and is vital in mobilizing potential participants.³¹ The black church was an important institution in southern separatist movements by producing its leaders and serving as a free space where African Americans could contemplate and/or deliberate without interference from repressive groups.³² Under these indigenous organizational setting black communities could discuss separatism and decide upon separatist organizations, leaders, and goals. A black congregation in Bryan, Texas decided to inquire about migration to Kansas and in a letter to Governor St. John outlined,

I address you this letter in behalf of a number of colored persons here who are desirous of emigrating to your state. They are laboring under the impression that land, provisions, and every thing essential to their prosperity will be given them free. Will you give us answers to the following questions. 1) What do you think of the movement? 2) To what political party do you belong? 3) How are those progressing who have gone already? 4) Is any land, provisions or _____, furnished those who may choose to emigrate. Your obd. Servt. C. M Porter, Pastor A. M. E. Church.³³

This clear message sent by some of Bryan’s potential black separatists necessitates the existence of an open meeting space for the exchange of ideas and concerns. The church offered a familiar setting, one in which controversial ideas such as separatism could be openly pondered without fear from repressive groups. Such a radical

³⁰ C. H. Bennett to William Coppinger, Newport, North Carolina, 1 April 1880, ACS, LOC; B. F. McDowell to William Coppinger, Charlotte, North Carolina, 7 May 1870, ACS, LOC.

³¹ Luther Gerlach and Virginia Hine, “Five Factors Crucial to the Growth and Spread of a Modern Religious Movement,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* vol. 7 no. 1 (Spring 1968): 23-40, 26-27; McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 124-132.

³² Francesca Polletta, “Free Spaces in Collective Action,” *Theory and Society*. Vol. 28 no. 1 (February 1999):1-38, 1. Free spaces are areas outside of the control of dominant groups, where participants discuss issues before collective action is taken.

³³ C. M. Porter to Governor John St. John, Bryan, Texas, 23 June 1879, NEP, KSHS.

idea may have appeared less disturbing when proposed under the direction of respected religious sponsors.

The black church was a powerful instrument in emigration movements, at times playing a supportive role and at others an unfavorable one. Regardless of its position, however, the church's influence was quite significant. One separatist recruiter commented, "I have been trying to do all I could for emigration to Liberia. But it seems to be in vain. I have met in congregation several times and seems their have no place."³⁴ Rev. S. Inghis, another recruiter, encountered similar problems when trying to encourage participation at a local church. He complained that in many instances, audiences were unsympathetic to the emigration cause and wrote, "In some towns not a single church is open for a discourse on the colonization subject." In one instance a local pastor attempted to persuade Inghis against colonization by offering him a chance to speak in his church. The pastor told Inghis that he had, "got hold of the wrong cause," and the church needed a man like him to "plead for the freedman's cause as you plead for the colonization cause." Inghis did not renounce colonization, but continued to visit and seek support from black churches. He sent the ACS a total of \$23.64 from a Methodist Episcopal church, from a Baptist church \$2.43, from a Presbyterian church \$13.00, and \$5.13 from two other area churches.³⁵ Wide spread acceptance or opposition of separatism at a local black church could encourage or hinder potential participation and is a strong predictor movement involvement.

Distance or closeness to movement activity also worked to encourage individual participation in black separatist movements. Communities neighboring communities where emigration movements had taken place were likely to form movements themselves. In North Carolina several rural areas were in favor of separatism and involved large segments of the

³⁴ J. Brown to William Coppinger, Eufaula, Alabama, 16 April 1870, ACS, LOC.

³⁵ Rev. S. Inghis to William Coppinger, Greenville, 16 May 1870, ACS, LOC.

community in their efforts for emigration. Black separatists organized five movements in Craven County to Liberia during the years 1879 and 1880. The region was bustling with interest in emigration, with several leaders recruiting several groups of families. In 1880, Decato Bennet, Richard J. Hyman, Dennis Thompson, E. R. Dudley, Harry Roberts and Thomas Daniels all reported to Secretary Coppinger that they were preparing to leave along with other families in the area.³⁶

Many of the black residents in neighboring towns of Plymouth in Washington County and Windsor in Bertie North Carolina were in favor of emigration and frequently corresponded with the ACS. By April of 1870, Benjamin Newbery had collected one hundred and eleven names of people who wanted to leave as early as that May.³⁷ Newbery was a separatist leader who corresponded with representatives of the ACS on behalf of Plymouth residents. Black residents throughout Washington and Bertie counties regularly gathered to hear news of Africa and were quite disappointed when arrangements could not be made for their transport that spring.³⁸

The ACS continued to correspond with potential participants and recruiters in the area. John S. Shepperd wished to unite separatist supporters the communities of Franklin, Lightfoot, and Jamesville in Martin County. He also informed the ACS that a local Penochuanian Quaker was willing to provide only the best information about the emigrants who were eager to hear if a ship would be leaving that fall.³⁹

³⁶ Decato Bennett to William Coppinger, New Berne, North Carolina, 6 March 1880, ACS, LOC; Richard J. Hyman to William Coppinger, New Bern, North Carolina, 17 March 1880, ACS, LOC; Dennis Thompson to William Coppinger, New Bern, North Carolina, 26 June 1880; E. R. Dudley to William Coppinger, New Bern, North Carolina, 22 June 1880, ACS, LOC; Harry Roberts to William Coppinger, New Berne, North Carolina, 18 June 1880, ACS, LOC; Thomas Daniels to William Coppinger, New Berne, North Carolina, 9 January 1880, ACS, LOC.

³⁷ Benjamin Newbery to Charles Shephard, Plymouth, North Carolina, 3 April 1870, ACS, LOC.

³⁸ Illegible to William Collinger (Coppinger), Windsor, Plymouth and Martin County, North Carolina, 8 April 1870, ACS, LOC.

³⁹ John S. Shepperd to William Coppinger, Windsor, North Carolina, 20 April 1870, ACS, LOC.

Plymouth and Windsor are located in the northeastern part of the state and are part of Bertie and Washington counties respectively. The two towns are located within twenty five miles of one another, a quality which would have encouraged cooperation and communication between the two communities in regard to the separatist movement. Jamesville is located in Martin County and shares borders with Washington and Bertie counties, conditions which also made coordination between the three areas easier.

The three counties also share an extensive history of slavery and had large black populations. In 1860 Bertie County had approximately 8,185 slaves. The majority of them or around 71% belonged to only 115 slaveholders with twenty or more slaves. Bertie County also had 319 free blacks. By 1870 both Washington and Martin counties had black populations over forty percent, while Bertie county had the highest black population, greater than fifty-seven percent, of the entire state.⁴⁰ Often counties that supported separatism, whether rural or urban, had large black populations.

Support for the separatist movement in Plymouth increased daily. Newbery continued to function as a local recruiter throughout the spring and continued to write Coppinger on behalf of other potential emigrants throughout the area. In April 1870, Newbery sent the ACS the names of one hundred and thirty people who wanted passage to Liberia that fall and continued for weeks to send the names of more interested blacks, promising that all were both pious and industrious.⁴¹ Many of the potential emigrants were self proclaimed hard workers, with the majority being farmers, and a few holding skilled occupations such as carpenters or even

⁴⁰ United States, Census Bureau, United States Census, 1870, University of Virginia, Historical Census Browser, <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/>>; The edge of Bertie County borders the Great Swamp also known as the Dismal Swamp. This area which includes parts of Currituck, Camden, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Chowan, and Gates Counties was home to a significant maroon population in the late 18th century; Leaming, *Hidden America*, 227.

⁴¹ Benjamin Newbery for W.G. Ralph to William Coppinger, , Plymouth, North Carolina, 22 April 1870, ACS, LOC; Benjamin Newberry to William Coppinger, Plymouth, North Carolina, 9 May 1870, ACS, LOC.

engineers. The majority were also practicing Christians, mostly Baptist, although some were Methodist. Many of the heads of household could also read, with each family usually having a least one literate adult.⁴²

Excitement about emigration continued to build throughout the Plymouth and Windsor communities. After receiving word from Coppinger that the emigrants would leave that fall, Newbery expressed his joy by writing, "Your letter of the 6th came to hand and I am very glad to receive it and desire to see the time come to leave this country for the land of our ancestors. I enclose a few more names that wish to emigrate to Liberia next fall."⁴³ A few months later in November one hundred and eleven people from Windsor, Bertie County, North Carolina and eighty one from Plymouth, Washington County, North Carolina left Baltimore aboard the *Golconda* for the towns of Arlington and Brewerville in Liberia. Significant numbers of people from each community emigrated, a fact which attests to the large amount of interest within each. Of the one hundred and ninety people to go from both communities, the majority traveled with families. Twenty six families in total left, while only thirteen individuals seemed to have made the journey alone. Benjamin Newbery was among the emigrants traveling with family. He emigrated with eighteen members of his immediate and extended family, the oldest being sixty-five and the youngest four months.⁴⁴ Local residents continued to write the ACS and inquire about their friends and relatives who had emigrated as well as about future emigration voyages.

In order for the residents of Plymouth and Windsor to have successfully immigrated to Liberia, a great amount of organization was needed. As in the antebellum period, blacks after the Civil War continued to work with the American Colonization Society and the colonization

⁴² "List of Emigrants for Liberia, by Ship *Golconda*, from Baltimore, November 1, and Hampton Roads, November 5, 1870," *African Repository* 46 (December 1870): 373-376.

⁴³ Benjamin Newberry to William Coppinger, Plymouth, North Carolina, 30 May 1870, ACS, LOC.

⁴⁴ "List of Emigrants for Liberia, by Ship *Golconda*, from Baltimore, November 1, and Hampton Roads, November 5, 1870," *African Repository* vol. 46 no. 12 (December 1870): 373-376.

movement. Even after emancipation and emergence of black separatists groups, the organization continued to be the primary vehicle for black emigration outside the United States and the primary organization by which whites could participate in the black separatist movement. Although the ACS was by far the most prominent of the separatist organizations in the U.S., its influence on black participation is overestimated. Less influential during the post war period, secondary organizations such as local and state auxiliaries of the ACS, also organized by whites, were important to legitimization, but did not recruit participants directly. Recruitment into the black separatist movement was performed by bridge organizations, which were founded and ran by lower class blacks.⁴⁵

Black separatist organizations such as the Liberian Exodus Association in South Carolina, the Edgefield Real Estate Association in Tennessee, and the Freedman's Emigrant Aid Association in North Carolina, aligned themselves with the ACS or other primarily white organizations such as the Kansas Freedman's Aid Society, in order to gain validity as a group as well as receive practical help. This interracial cooperation provided black organizations with increased financial and social security without significantly decreasing their authority within the separatist movement. Bridge organizations maintained the most critical place within the black separatist movement by their ability to hold local meetings and give positive support to potential participants in order to increase recruitment.

The presence of supportive social movement organizations is critical to movement development. Historian Michelle Mitchell categorizes black territorial separatist organizations into three models. Organizations that primarily functioned as intellectual spaces for potential emigrants are classified as societies. A club is a "loose configuration" of prospective emigrants

⁴⁵ Robnett, *How Long? How Long*, 24-25; Robnett defines bridge organizations as teaching indigenous groups how to help themselves, offering less centralized organization, and placing more authority in the hands of local leaders.

who usually resided near one another, while an order is the most complex of the three models, typically having developed by laws, collected dues, or had some sort of governing body.⁴⁶

Mitchell's citation regarding the variety of black organizations is quite notable and the many letters written by organizational bodies indicate these types of structures.

The unique political environment of the South affected territorial separatist movement organization. An environment of repression combined with one of limited opportunity accounts in part for the organizational variation in the black separatist movement. John H. Rhoe corresponded regularly with the ACS for over ten years on behalf of himself and other residents of Eufaula, Alabama. A group of separatists left the town for Liberia in 1868 and Rhoe continued to write Coppinger about the conditions affecting blacks in Eufaula. This type of organization interaction in Eufaula is consistent with the society model using Mitchell's analysis. In 1871 Rhoe wrote that "times were hard" and that "the Colored People in the division can scarcely get their bread for their labor for the year of 1870 and can't tell how it may be this year."⁴⁷ Rhoe was referring to the exploitative nature of sharecropping in the South. He also wrote Coppinger about the social repression that was taking place. In February he wrote, "that the White people in this vicinity are very much opposed to the idea and of the Colored people of this vicinity even thinking of going to that benighted place they calls it but I think that is the land of our for Fathers and they would like very much for to keep us here when they can get our labor as they always has."⁴⁸ Eufaula was no stranger to racial violence and oppression. The town was the site of a brutal race riot regarding the election of 1874, resulting in the deaths of over 100 African Americans.⁴⁹ Repressive organizational conditions existed throughout various parts of the South,

⁴⁶ McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 124-132; Mitchell, 34-35.

⁴⁷ John H. Rhoe to William Coppinger, Eufaula, Alabama, 18 January 1871, ACS, LOC.

⁴⁸ John H. Rhoe to William Coppinger, Eufaula, Alabama, 26 February 1871, ACS, LOC.

⁴⁹ Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers or Scalawags*, 208.

a fact that may have retarded more elaborate organizational development, but not organizations entirely.

Black residents in Louisville, Kentucky had formed a club in order to migrate to Kansas. N. R. Harper wrote to Governor St. John that the group was, “with the view of settling in your state [Kansas].” Calling themselves a colony, Harper’s group asked the Governor to address several concerns about aid to emigrants and the vicinity of the new settlements. One of the most significant insights learned from the letter is the amount of research that was carried out by potential emigrants regarding new settlement locations. The group asks the Governor to write them in order, “that we may govern our action accordingly.”⁵⁰ Organizations such as the club in Louisville worked as a resource for potential movement participants by allowing interaction with other supporters, encouraging an open discourse, and by addressing participant concerns and calming fears. Although the Louisville club did not openly complain of repressive tactics by white, other separatist organizations were not as fortunate.

The Mutual Aid Society of New Orleans can be classified as an order and was repressed by local authorities. Leader W. H. Harrison complained that their large meetings with hundreds of members were held at local churches and disrupted by police who were trying to stop them from engaging in discussions about migration to Kansas. Harrison and other governing members regularly corresponded with Governor St. John about migrating to Kansas in order to receive the most accurate information for planning their relocation. In June of 1879 the order was prepared to send a committee to scout possible settlement locations, speak with railroad and land agents, and hold meetings in Kansas.⁵¹ Historians such as Kenneth Barnes and George Tindall have chosen to study the more publicized and dramatic failures of black separatist organizations, but

⁵⁰ N. R. Harper to Governor John St. John, Louisville, Kentucky, 22 April 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁵¹ W. H. Harrison to Governor John St. John, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2 June 1879, NEP, KSHS, W. H. Harrison to Governor John St. John, New Orleans, Louisiana, 18 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

the amount of organizational planning necessary to carry out a separatist endeavor must not be neglected.⁵² Although the extent of movement organization differed, the mere existence and frequency of radical grassroots organizations in such repressive conditions is extraordinary to say the least.

Residents of Elizabeth City, North Carolina formed the Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Society for the purposes of immigrating to Liberia. The organization established a system of officers, dues, a constitution, and most likely functioned as an order. The group encouraged other blacks to organize Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Societies in every county of the state and to, "send delegates to a State Convention," on emigration that was to be planned in the future.⁵³ Black residents in Lexington, Kentucky also formed an order for the purpose of migrating to Kansas. Aside from having an executive body, the colony even published their intentions in an advertisement, "All Colored People that want to go to Kansas, on September 5th, 1877, can do so for \$5.00." Attesting to the uncertain conditions from which they were fleeing, the group, "Resolved, That this Colony shall have from one to two hundred militia, more or less, as the case may require, to keep peace and order, and any member failing to pay in his dues, as foresaid, or failing to comply with the above rules in any particular, will not be recognized or protected by the Colony."⁵⁴ This separatist order endeavored to organize a militia in their new colony, a feat which required complex planning and immense communal support.

The operations of these organizations have not been sufficiently analyzed and more research needs to be conducted as to ascertain the characteristics of grassroots territorial separatist organizations during this period. Because of the low socioeconomic status of the

⁵² Kenneth Barnes, *Journey of Hope*, 75-90; Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes*, 155-168.

⁵³ Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Society, "Constitution to the Elizabeth City (N.C.) Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Society," *African Repository* 47 (May 1871): 152; Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Society, "Address to the People of Color by the Elizabeth City (N. C.) Freedmen's Emigrant Aid Society," *African Repository* (1871): 3.

⁵⁴ "All Colored People that Want to Go to Kansas," 1877, NEP, KSHS.

participants, the inundation of migrants at certain locales, or even the rapid mobilization associated with a "fever", some historians may assume that participants engaged in little or no planning. However quite the contrary is true and the extensive planning undertaken in the operation of these separatist movement organizations is quite significant.

Similarly to the relationship between individual participation and membership in a supportive organization, organizational development during the Black Exodus also possessed an associative character. Social movement researcher Aldon Morris has shown that social movement organizations during the modern Civil Rights Movement grew out of pre-existing institutional relationships. One of the most influential organizations in facilitating social movement within black arenas is the church.⁵⁵ During colonization movements, whites used religious organizations to muster support for black colonization in Africa. In Ohio, ACS meetings were frequently held at protestant churches and clergymen collected donations from their congregations.⁵⁶ Likewise after the Civil War, the black church played a monumental role by influencing public opinion and collective action in support of the emigration movement.

In many cases black churches worked to increase support for territorial separatism. An article published in the *African Repository* claimed to have over three thousand names enrolled for passage to Liberia in 1872 and of these three thousand, five were licensed ministers. The article is simply titled, "Another Application," but its mention of religious organizations is significant. It goes on to state that "Many of their church members wish to accompany them, and locating in a body, plant organized Christian civilization in the midst of heathenism. Some are desirous of the means of settlement simply to better their condition and others because they

⁵⁵ Aldon Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: First Free Press, 1984), 4-12.

⁵⁶ Thomas Matijasic, "The African Colonization Movement and Ohio's Protestant Community," *Phylon* vol. 46 no. 1 (March 1985): 16-24.

yearn for an honorable nationality for their race in Africa.”⁵⁷ Ministers who supported separatism were often joined by members of their congregations. The black masses and black ministers were united by separatism, despite their divergent ideological agendas of land ownership and evangelization.

A separatist meeting could be held at a church, which could result in the formation of separatist organization. The article in the *African Repository* ends with a letter from Joseph Blake of the Dallas County Emigration Society of Selma, Alabama. The letter briefly refers to its religious origins by plainly stating, “So far as organized, our members are mostly professors of religion. Among us are carpenters, blacksmiths, bricklayers, plasterers, cabinet-makers, wheelwrights, brickmaskers, and other mechanics.”⁵⁸ It is no coincidence that the organizing members of the Dallas County Emigration Society were “professors of religion.” Simple resources such as a building for meetings or a receptive audience were regularly afforded to ministers and it is not unreasonable that their religious leadership could be transferred to organizational leadership in the separatist groups as well.

Like organizational structure during black separatist movements, the role of leadership also presents a number of patterns, which become evident from the letters of movement participants and other documents. Max Weber’s classifications of legal rational, traditional and charismatic leaders are all readily apparent in the composition of leadership during black separatist movements.⁵⁹ As in the antebellum era, after the Civil War, black separatist leaders gained authority from a combination of these types.

⁵⁷ “Another Application,” *African Repository* 48 (June 1872): 16.

⁵⁸ Another Application,” *African Repository* 48 (June 1872): 16.

⁵⁹ Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* Translated by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1958), 78-80.

Preachers often have an elevated position in black society, at times functioning in the dual religious and civil roles.⁶⁰ Reverend Benjamin Burks of Lagrange, Georgia wrote Gov. St. John on numerous occasions, once asserting, “I have a great influence with the people of Troup County, as a minister of the gospel. Many families besides mine wants to imigrate with me. We want to enter into a county, where we will feel free. I would like to have regular correspondence with you. Sir until I get direct information as the people looking to me as their leader.”⁶¹ Religious leaders are established leaders in the community and gain their authority via the institutional authority of the church. As social movement organizations possess or establish connections with religious organizations, so too did social movement leaders possess or establish authority in local religious bodies and black communities.

Well known black ministers supporting separatism often functioned as formal leaders in the movement.⁶² Bishop Henry McNeal Turner’s call for black separatism was supported by the ACS. Both whites and blacks accepted Turner’s leadership in the separatist movement, because of his notoriety and recognition from the A.M.E. Church.⁶³ Religious education however is not the only characteristic of leaders of black separatist movements after the Civil War. Some contemporaries questioned the leadership, integrity, and ability of ministers altogether. Journalist T. Thomas Fortune observed,

The Cross of Christ had been held up before the colored youth as if the whole end and aim of life was to preach the Gospel, as if the philosophy of heaven superseded in practical importance the philosophy of life,” and goes on to write, “preaching, has largely become a trade or profession, in which the churches with large salaries have become prizes for with almost as much zeal and partisanship as prizes in politics.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks* (Las Vegas: Classic American Publishing, 1999), 146-159.

⁶¹ Reverend Benjamin Burks to Governor John P. St. John, Lagrange, GA, 12 May 1879, NEP, KSHS;

⁶² Robnett, *How Long? How Long?*, 18.

⁶³ “They Will Go To Africa,” *African Repository* 67 no. 4 (October 1891): 112.

⁶⁴ Fortune, 71.

Although one may doubt the sincerity of some religious leaders, one cannot deny their esteemed place in black communities and the significant impact their official stances had on increasing separatist support or dissent.

Legal rational leaders can gain authority from political roles and often function as formal leaders.⁶⁵ Such leaders focus on large scale movement management and coordination and less on the straightforward task of individual recruitment. In Tennessee, the Erskine family was a black family from the Knoxville area, who immigrated to Liberia before the Civil War. In 1866 two representatives of the ACS arrived in Knoxville to recruit local blacks for immigration to Liberia. Samuel McMillan, an agent from Ohio, failed to raise a colony from that state, although he did succeed in recruiting some forty persons in the Knoxville area. H. W. Erskine, however, gained the names of over two hundred individuals willing to immigration to Liberia that fall.⁶⁶ H. W. Erskine returned to the United States after the war to promote Liberian emigration. Erskine was elected to the Liberian House of Representatives in 1853 and in 1864 worked as the country's Attorney General. In addition to his association with the ACS, Erskine's political position in Liberia further legitimized his authority within Knoxville's black community and aid in his recruitment efforts. Governor William Brownlow personally encouraged his activities throughout the state.⁶⁷

Just as importantly as Erskine's authority is his ability to convey favorable firsthand accounts of his experiences in Liberia and offer reassurance to an undoubtedly optimistic, but apprehensive and uncertain group of participants. Regarding his recruitment progress Erskine

⁶⁵ Robnett, 25; Robnett finds that formal leaders in the modern Civil Rights Movement connect social movement organizations to white society by political alliances, mobilize participants nationally through writings and speeches, tie the organization to like-minded groups and engage with local organizations and leaders.

⁶⁶ Samuel McMillan to William Coppinger, Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, 10 September 1866, ACS, LOC; H. W. Erskine to William Coppinger, 24 September 1866, ACS, LOC; The actual number of emigrants who left that year from Knoxville was 144; "A Large Expedition for Liberia," *African Repository* 42 (December 1866): 374.

⁶⁷ "Steamboats to England; Results of the Elections," *African Repository* 29 (September 1853): 285; "Liberian Intelligence," *African Repository* 40 (May 1865): 136.

wrote, “I distributed the tracks and pamphlets you were kind enough to give me and then began to talk, and reason with them. – as soon as – I became know to our people and inform them that I was born in Knoxville and had lived in Liberia for 26 years, both white and black crowded around me, seeking information.”⁶⁸ Erskine’s political position in Liberia helped to legitimize his authority within the black community of Knoxville, but his ability to persuade individuals with his first hand knowledge of the Liberia is comparable to the third type of authority defined by Weber.

Charismatic authority is not derived from any institutional reinforcement or force, but rather by a person’s character. Sometimes a leader’s oratory style and suasion could influence participation. In the western Mississippi, in counties bordering the Mississippi River, a man called Dr. Collins used his “frenzied oratory” to induce laborers to consider emigration to Liberia.⁶⁹ Pap Singleton, the leader in the migration from Tennessee to Kansas, was a charismatic leader. Singleton declared in a speech, “I am here for a special purpose – to tell the cause of the exodus. I have been in the cause thirteen years. I have been talking to my people and they have seen the light and are seeking homes.”⁷⁰ Singleton’s followers related to his powerful speeches and use of personal stories and vivid imagery. These methods probably endeared him with movement supporters and further added to his charisma.

Singleton viewed himself as uniquely called to lead the “exodus” out of the South and into the Midwest, however his position was not completely based upon merit. Although Singleton was popular among many separatist supporters, others, in positions of authority, were not so charmed by his graces. Mr. E. D. Butler of the Dunlap colony in Kansas visited the office

⁶⁸ H. W. Erskine to William Copping, Knoxville, Tennessee, 14 August 1866, ACS, LOC.

⁶⁹ *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States*, 520.

⁷⁰ Benjamin Singleton, Miscellaneous, NEP, LOC.

of the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association along with Mr. Columbus M. Johnson. The two representatives reported their disfavor with Singleton regarding his handling of business matters. Butler told the Association Johnson was, "a man who is capable of looking after the interests of the colony in manner satisfactory to all," while Singleton was, "not capable of doing the business that would be required at the Dunlap colony." Butler also requested to "take charge of the yoke of cattle that the association owns. And see that they were well fed and taken care of."⁷¹

Charisma played a significant role in establishing and maintaining Singleton's leadership role in the Exoduster Movement. At a meeting of the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association, a member suggested that someone go to Indiana and investigate if some of the refugees could be diverted to that state. When someone suggested Singleton as a good candidate for this trip, Singleton decided to address the Association and spoke at length about his qualifications, including his "pleasing face" and reliability. Singleton declared, "The people wanted to see his face and they should have the opportunity."⁷² This self affirmation was also endorsed to some degree by his followers. When Singleton went away, his followers were said to "take up collections for him sometimes, at meetings, in churches."⁷³ Blacks did not elect Singleton to his position nor did officials appoint him as a separatist leader, rather he earned recognition through his ability to mobilize participation and separatist support.

In the South separatist leaders endorsed unique strategies, which are revealed by the writings of grassroots organizers. Blacks in the South were also less opposed to working with white organizations and patrons, while northern leaders were more skeptical, viewing these efforts as racist in nature.⁷⁴ Southern black separatism was never exclusively segregated, but

⁷¹ Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association Records, 16, NEP, KSHS

⁷² Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association Records, 25, NEP, KSHS

⁷³ Unsigned Letter, 19 November 1883, Benjamin Singleton, Miscellaneous, NEP, KSHS.

⁷⁴ Mitchell, 23.

always entailed a degree of interracial cooperation and sustained interaction. Black separatist leaders used distinct strategies of interracial cooperation, advocating at times both private and public support. Henry Adams testified that he first wrote President Rutherford B. Hayes regarding the enforcement of laws protecting black civil rights in Louisiana. Adams went on to appeal to Congress to set aside a territory for blacks or to give financial aid to separatist movements. Adams and other black separatist leaders sought the help of the U. S. government and white officials when organizing their projects.

In many instances black separatist also worked with the Freedmen's Bureau in order to successfully immigrate to Liberia. Often spurred by the desire to alleviate racial tensions, Bureau agents encouraged emigration through the ACS and offered security to black, who without their help would risk greater white oppression by foregoing their endeavors independently. C. R. Reeves of Marion, South Carolina wrote General Robert Scott of the Freedmen's Bureau in Charleston, South Carolina, "what was the way for them to git rid of their oppressers?" Scott advised them to, "seek a home in Liberia," and also encouraged migration to Florida or some other western territory.⁷⁵ By working with the Freedmen's Bureau, blacks countered many of the repressive tactics used by unsympathetic whites and were at times even given assistance with travel arrangements to the coast. Fleming Crump was the leader of the separatist movement in Stewart County, Tennessee. Crump initially sought the help of J. F. Flood, a white Captain living in the area, in leading an emigration party from Tennessee. Flood was directed by General Oliver Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau to write Secretary Coppinger on behalf of the 54 members of their party.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ C. R. Reeves to William Coppinger, Marion, South Carolina, 5 April 1867, ACS, LOC.

⁷⁶ J. Flood to Secretary William Coppinger, Dover, Tennessee, 13 August 1867, ACS, LOC; J. P. Flood to Secretary William Coppinger, Dover, Tennessee, 19 July 1867, ACS, LOC.

During the Exoduster movement black residents of Little Rock held a migration convention to discuss leaving the state in mass. In addition to choosing two commissioners to investigate suitable settlement territories, representatives supported the Windom Resolution, designed by Senator William Windom of Minnesota, which sought to give financial aid to blacks choosing to relocate.⁷⁷ Black separatists in Valdosta, Georgia were eager to go to Liberia after their, “friends rites to us to come.” They, like so many other black separatists in the South, were without financial means and wrote to the President of the Congress and the Speaker of the House for assistance in 1872. They believed that “if the United States will not help us we want to go where we can have a home and live and praise god and be a happy people.”⁷⁸

Black separatists also sought the help of white people and private organizations supporting separatism. Although operating as a separate organization, leaders of the Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society in Elizabeth City, “desired to act as an auxiliary of the American Colonization Society.” Black southerners perceived cooperation with whites to be in their best interest. A white reporter, when interviewing Pap Singleton, observed he, “is in no sense a politician.” Singleton did not stress the importance of political rights to the reporter, but rather the “prime importance to the plain, practical business of making a living and securing a home.”⁷⁹ Singleton relegated issues such as politics to the realm of white male citizenry, undoubtedly to calm white anxieties over black power.

In Washington County, Texas, white Republican S. A. Hackworth regularly corresponded with Governor St. John about the conditions of area blacks and the prospects of an all black

⁷⁷ “The Negro Migration: A Convention of Colored Men in Little Rock,” *The Chicago Tribune* May 17, 1879, p. 42, NEP, KSHS.

⁷⁸ Jacob McKinney to William Coppinger, Valdosta, Georgia, 3 May 1872, ACS, LOC.

⁷⁹ “The Exodus Additional Testimony,” March 12, p. 72, NEP, KSHS; “Address to the People of Color by the Elizabeth City (N. C.) Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society,” 3; “The Origins of the Exodus,” *The Chicago Tribune* May 17, 1879, p. 38, NEP, KSHS.

settlement in Texas or Kansas. A true philanthropist, Hackworth purchased land for black settlements in Texas and sold it to blacks for reasonable prices. For these gestures, blacks trusted and respected him, going so far as to invite him to attend an Exoduster meeting and Juneteenth celebration. Hackworth's fair land sales policies enticed blacks from Fort Bend, Brazoria and Matagorda counties to move.⁸⁰ In May 1879 Hackworth wrote Governor St. John,

There exists an absolute necessity to colonize the colored people of the South, because their welfare and future prosperity as a people depends upon their becoming the owner of the lands they cultivate and that unless the wealthy Republicans of the North speedily write in a well organized movement to effect this purpose the great majority of the colored people will be gradually reduced to a system of slavery or peonage, and the national government will pass into the hands of the Bourbon Democracy.⁸¹

Local blacks appreciated Hackworth's genuine concern for them and their efforts to improve their wellbeing.

Interracial cooperation was utilized as an accommodation strategy by blacks in a racially hostile environment. This strategy is a condition of the racist political structure and a product of the extensive history of interracial cooperation in separatist movements in the South. Regarding interracial political cooperation in the south after the Civil War historian C. Van Woodward writes,

While there was a certain amount of fawning Uncle-Tomism among the Negroes, there is little doubt that the prouder of them secretly despised the patronizing pose and self flattering paternalism of the whites with whom they found refuge. It was not sentimentality for 'ole Marstar that inspired the freedmen, but the hot breadth of cracker fanaticism they felt on the backs of their necks.⁸²

While the writings of black separatists in the South do not indicate an intense resentment to white supporters, letters do indicate black use of paternalist rhetoric. Well after the civil war southern blacks writing letters to the ACS and to Governor St. John of Kansas were often signed your humble servant. W. H. Harrison, the President of the Mutual Aid Emigration Society of

⁸⁰ Bruce Glasrud, "Black Texas Improvement Efforts, 1879-1929, Migration, Separatism, Nationalism," *The Journal of South Texas* 14 no. 2 (2001): 211; Stephen A. Hackworth to Governor John St. John, Brenham, Washington County, Texas, 31 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁸¹ Stephen A. Hackworth to Governor John St. John, Brenham, Washington County, Texas, 20 June 1878, NEP, KSHS.

⁸² C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* 2nd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 51.

New Orleans, used a strategic humility and paternalistic appeal when seeking the aid of Governor St. John in migrating to Kansas. In a letter dated May 1879 he wrote,

I will send you a copy of the Regulation of Mississippi threatening to kill all white persons who aid the colored people in obtaining their rights, and in assisting them to leave oppression, your communications are of great value to our people at all times, and will be appreciated, we know for a fact that all white people are not our oppressors therefore you may not assume that we are led to believe from your instruction and editorials published in news-papers that you are truly our friend, please send a list of the officers of the R. R. of Kansas And if possible please send me a state map of Kansas.⁸³

Harrison refers to the Governor as “truly our friend” and does not categorize him with oppressive whites. Southern black leaders often wrote about whites oppressing black people in the hopes of inciting sympathy in the reader.

Framing is the process of how movement leaders and organizations relay their ideology to the public. It is the process of defining how social movement ideologies or objectives should be interpreted by and how to transfer them in a manner to gain support from the masses.⁸⁴ Four distinct frames emerge in the black lower class territorial separatist movements in the South: oppression, justice, cultural and religious. Oppression frames emphasize white violence committed against blacks, justice frames emphasize the lack of black rights, cultural frames emphasize black heritage, and religious frames emphasize providential black uplift. Black separatists used these different frames so as to receive the most support from white sympathizers and black participants.⁸⁵

⁸³ W. H. Harrison to Governor John P. St. John, New Orleans, Louisiana, 27 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁸⁴ David Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” *International Social Movement Research* 1 (1988): 197-217; 198. Snow and Benford write that social movements organizations must “frame, or assign meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support and to demobilize antagonists.”

⁸⁵ Holly J. McCammon, Courtney Sanders Muse, Harmony D. Newman, and Teresa M. Terrell. “Movement Framing and Discursive “Opportunity Structures: The Political Successes of the U.S. Women's Jury Movements.” *American Sociological Review* (2007) 72:725-49, 728-729, Political environments affected the way in which organizations strategically used different frames to mobilize support in various locales.

Various classes can also be attracted to a social movement by different frames.⁸⁶ It can then be reasoned that social movement participants will use various frames according to class. Aspiring black middle class participants such as reverends or writers utilize religious and cultural frames, while lower class blacks utilized oppression and justice frames more.⁸⁷ All of these frames were effective tools when soliciting separatist support because of both their understandability to the black masses in the South and accommodation to many white sympathizers.

W. H. Harrison, President of the emigration order in New Orleans, Louisiana used the oppression frame when writing Gov. St. John on behalf of his organization and its members. “We generally hope to get the best Wishes of our northern associations for we are all most satisfied that you all know our condition here In the South all most as well as we can tell you for the depradation that so perpetuated upon the poor innocent and unprotected colored people be enough to make the Blood curdles in a human being.”⁸⁸ Oppression frames were meant to invoke sympathy and urgency among its listeners and portray blacks as victims of systematic violence.

S. H. B. Schoomaker used a justice frame when he wrote Governor St. John and outlined four inquires on behalf of his group: land procurement, employment opportunity, aid given, and protection of rights. Schoomaker wrote the Governor about the conditions of blacks in the area of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, detailing, “They feel and reasonably justly that the future here holds out no hope, no encouragement, no light of comfort to the, that to suffer and die with privation, exposure, and want under the caring influence of freedom and justice? That to remain here slaves

⁸⁶ Mary Jo Neitz, “Family, State, and God: Ideologies of the Right to Life Movement,” 42 *Social Analysis* (1981): 265-276, 265.

⁸⁷ Newton, *The Children of Africa in the Colonies*, 203-204; Newton documents how elite people of color in Barbados argued in favor of colonization by using the idea of the civilizing mission or the perceived benefits Afro-Americans imparting western culture to Africans.

⁸⁸ W. H. Harrison to Governor John P. St. John, New Orleans, Louisiana, 18 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

in all but name.”⁸⁹ While the ideology of freedom and specifically land is shown through the four concerns of the group, Schoomaker uses the justice frame to connect with concepts of patriotism and liberty internalized by whites and blacks.

Miles Morgan from St. Helena Parish, Louisiana was unsatisfied with local conditions and wanted to go to Liberia when he declared to Secretary Coppinger, “I cant rais my children here and let them be men an women of any business here.”⁹⁰ Applicants referenced their desire for American traditional middle class goals such as education and land. Such goals were shared by both blacks and whites, and relaxed white fears over the radicalism of black separatism. Letters indicate that the majority of frames used with the black lower classes were of these two oppression and justice types.

Religious and cultural frames were used with far less frequency among this cohort and were most employed among upper class and professional blacks. Religious frames emphasize black evangelization of native Africans or the similar plight of blacks and oppressed peoples in the Bible as principles upon which to mobilize participation. Reverend Latrobe appealed to the “Christian integrity” of the ACS when requesting assistance in going to Liberia, writing,

After rendering you and your Benevolent Society my best wishes and a happy success in Christianizing and civilizing the Dark continent of Africa my benighted home I will first state to you who I am I am a minister of the gospel of the A. M. E. Church have been engaged and devoted the most of my time in education to the colored youths for which I desire to go to Liberia to help elevate my people.⁹¹

Latrobe uses both cultural and religious frames when seeking support from the ACS, but primarily attempts to gather support from the ACS by emphasizing a shared Christian duty. Cultural frames were often used together with religious frames in separatist ideology. Julian Green of Augusta, Georgia was emotionally distraught over the, “heathens of Africa,” and had

⁸⁹ S. H. B. Shoomaker to Governor John P. St. John, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 12 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

⁹⁰ Miles Morgan to William Coppinger, St. Helena Parish, Louisiana, 12 July 1880, ACS, LOC.

⁹¹ Rev. J. C. Whitaker to John H. B. Latrobe, Pitoil, Fort Bend, Texas, 28 December 1879, ACS, LOC.

decided to become a missionary in order to help the “poor souls who are dying daily by the thousands without hearing of God and promises.” He appealed to Secretary Coppinger on behalf of those who, “cry from African ‘come over and help us.’” Fearing chastisement from God if he did not immigrate to Liberia, Green declared the Africans, “had burdens one to my mind and I do feel that the only way to ease my mind of it is to beacon to the call and go to their assistance.”⁹²

Indeed, not only ministers, but all blacks were prepared, by their “fortunate fall” into American slavery and their cultural experiences of Christianity, to improve Africa in some capacity. The Freedmen’s Aid Society of North Carolina declared, “Africa, poor Africa, the land of our fathers, was too deeply sunk in barbarism to comprehend the glorious truths that fell from the lips of Jesus.” The group had determined, they, as black Americans, were uniquely equipped to redeem the continent and declared, “Having here had an opportunity to obtain a saving knowledge of the everlasting Gospel of Christ, and, to some extent, of the mechanical arts, may we not reasonably hope that, with the Divine blessing, we may be instrumental in causing, “Ethiopia to stretch out her hands unto God.”⁹³ Religious and cultural frames were used to advocate black emigration movements and implied a level of sophistication on the part of the emigrant whose charge was to redeem native Africans. Upper class and professional blacks met this criterion and readily employed cultural and religious frames when advocating separatism.

Cultural frames use the rhetoric of heritage preservation to promote mobilization by resonating with the ethnic affections of supporters.⁹⁴ Jno. Ford of Epoint Springs, North Carolina was an educated man from all pretenses. Ford published an article in the *North Carolina Farmer* about the Exodus and even set forth a plan for gaining government financial

⁹² Julian Green to William Coppinger, Augusta, Georgia, 5 June 1880, ACS, LOC.

⁹³ “Address to the People of Color by the Elizabeth City (N. C.) Freedmen’s Emigrant Aid Society,” 1.

⁹⁴ Mitch Berbrier, “Half the Battle: Cultural Resonance, Framing Processes, and Ethnic Affections in Contemporary White Separatist Rhetoric,” 45 *Social Problems* (1998): 431-450, 440-444, White supremacists used arguments favoring ethnic affections and heritage preservation as means to increase recruitment and decrease repression.

assistance by starting a line of transport ships from North Carolina to Monrovia, Liberia. The only evidence to Ford's motivations for emigration is his reference to, "carry the colored people to their fatherland."⁹⁵ This simple declaration of shared heritage and identity was enough to justify why he and other blacks should be sent to Liberia. Frank Simpson took a more pessimistic approach to invoke the importance of ancestry stating that, "African is the place for all of the colored race to go We never will be of any importance in this country this is not the Africans home." Simpson had come to accept racism in the United States, and other western countries, was the inherent product of a nation founded by white men. Therefore, the only solution for black men to achieve self-determination was territorial separatism. Simpson continued, "I believe that every race must go home and we must all go to Liberia before we can be a people."⁹⁶ Although not a motivating reason for leaving the South, some black separatists nonetheless employed heritage frames when seeking assistance from the ACS.

After the Civil War black separatists employed various frames, but always professed an ideology encompassing concepts of both land and liberty.⁹⁷ For ex-slaves liberty did not simply mean legal freedom, but rather a high level of self-determination; a goal, which southern blacks believed was impossible to achieve without land ownership and economic power. Historian Omar Ali writes of the postwar South, "In a predominantly agrarian society ownership of land guaranteed a degree of economic and political independence."⁹⁸ Southern freedmen did not want to own land to simply subsist, but wanted to prosper as independent entrepreneurs and respected citizens.

⁹⁵ Jno F. Foard to William Coppinger, Eupoptie Springs, Indell County, North Carolina, 8 January 1880, ACS, LOC.

⁹⁶ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, Columbus, Georgia, 20 January 1867, ACS, LOC.

⁹⁷ David Snow, "Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Edited by David Snow, Sarah Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publisher, 2004), 397; Snow states, "ideology is generally invoked as a cover term for a relatively stable and coherent set of values, beliefs, and goals associated with a movement or a broader, encompassing, social entity, and is assumed to provide the rationale for defending or challenging various social arrangements and conditions."

⁹⁸ Ali, *In the Balance of Power*, 67.

The question of black land ownership will inevitably become a problem in post emancipation agricultural societies when not addressed by government authorities. Regarding post emancipation condition society in Jamaica, historian Hugh Paget writes, “For a people who have for generations derived their livelihood from the soil can hardly be divorced from it by the stroke of a pen without disastrous results.”⁹⁹ In Jamaica, whites sold land to or permitted squatting by freedmen, thus nullifying the need for a mass black separatist movement among the lower class because of the lack of opportunities for land ownership and farming in an agricultural based society.¹⁰⁰ While some exceptions do occur, in general southern blacks did not have the opportunity to purchase land after emancipation, a condition that incited many to advocate separatism.¹⁰¹ The lack of available land for purchase motivated blacks to advocate separatism and to collectively organize in order to leave the South.

Sidney Mintz writes that black land ownership in the Caribbean was both an act of westernization and resistance.¹⁰² Like their brethren in the Caribbean who acted upon their desires of land ownership, black southern separatists were simultaneously embracing American middle class values of industry and economy while also resisting American racism when advocating separatism. Black southern separatists readily incorporated American ideologies of capitalism and southern ideologies of land ownership within their social movements. The failure to achieve these principles devastated lower class black aspirations of being able to achieve liberty and pursue happiness in the South. Even more so than evangelism, these practical

⁹⁹ Hugh Paget, “The Free Village System in Jamaica,” in *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* p. 45-58, (Mona, Kingston, Jamaica: Department of the Extra Mural Studies, University of the West Indies, 1970), 46.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins Press, 1992), 161.

¹⁰¹ Pease and Pease, *Black Utopia*, 142-159; Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*, 71; Scott notes how some men of color who were legislators in Louisiana were able to become successful farmers after political defeat and the end of Reconstruction.

¹⁰² Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago: Aldine, 1974), 135.

ideologies of uplift were the most influential in the southern black separatist movements of the nineteenth century.

Land did not just mean a livelihood; it also meant independence. Southern blacks reasoned that varying degrees of political and social independence were contingent on this basic economic goal. Writing about the importance of land to southern blacks in 1884, Fortune noted,

They are principally the agriculturists of the South, consequently, being wedded to the soil by life-long association and interest, and being principally a laboring class, they will naturally invest their surplus earnings in the purchase of the soil. Herein lies the hope for the future for he who owns the soil largely runs and dictates to the men who are compelled to live upon it and derive their subsistence from it. The colored people of the South recognize this fact. And if there is any one idiosyncrasy more marked than any other among them, it is their mania for buying land. They all labor in cheerful anticipation of some day owning a home, a farm of their own.¹⁰³

Unlike their northern counterparts, who exalted civil liberties, southern black separatists primarily voiced concerns regarding land acquisition. Southern separatists reasoned that other civil liberties would be achieved after economic security. Although black southerners did not witness black political ascendancy in the antebellum period, they did, despite rampant inequality, on occasion witness the economic success of some free blacks and even slaves. The social mobility that could be achieved through wealth in the South would not have been forgotten by blacks after the Civil War. It was this notation of economic primacy that most informed the southern black separatist ideology of land and liberty. Two Reverends from Marshall, Texas wrote Gov. St. John to in order to “correct the error the people had in them about the one of 160 acres of land for a family.”¹⁰⁴ Amid such rumors, the local community in Marshall became greatly enthused about the opportunities for land ownership and economic prosperity. The reaction of Marshall’s black community reflects the aspiration of southern blacks in general to acquire land and their intense commitment to achieving this goal.

¹⁰³ Fortune, 207.

¹⁰⁴ Rev. W. Wesley and Rev. Henry Smith, Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, 17 May 1879, NEP, KSHS.

Du Bois attributes the failure of populism and other class based social movements in the South in part to this ambition on the part of the lower and middle classes to aspire to and align with the upper classes.¹⁰⁵ Such practices further attest to the movement's conservative American economic ethos and absence of a radical class based ideology despite a lower and middle class aggregate. Post war southern black separatist were not Pan-Africanists and most readily identified themselves by their African American ethnicity. Although middle and lower class participants made up the crux of the black separatist movement in the South, the movement by in large was not class based.

Economic independence was not the only goal of the black lower class in the South. Liberty and land ownership also entailed a variety of civil rights. A resident of East Carroll Parish, Louisiana wrote to Governor St. John in order to learn if in Kansas, "life and property is secure, the right of franchise respected, public education facilitated in the interest of all citizens alike."¹⁰⁶ The liberty and land ideology endorsed by black separatists in the South emphasizes an economic nature, not unlike, the economic uplift strategy propelled by Booker T. Washington. Sociologist H. Svi Shapiro and W. E. B. DuBois assert that social movements in a class society tend to take on a class character.¹⁰⁷ Black territorial separatists in the South emphasized class based goals by seeking greater social opportunity and security through land ownership.

A particular settlement location was not critical to the southern black separatist liberty and land ideology. In fact, any location could be acceptable if blacks could obtain a significant degree of independence. While many historians study separatism in Louisiana during Reconstruction by examining the Exoduster movement to Kansas, Henry Adams, reported that

¹⁰⁵ Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 608-609.

¹⁰⁶ Cain Sortuid to Governor John St. John, Illawarra, East Carroll Parish, Louisiana, 30 March 1879, NEP, KSHS.

¹⁰⁷ H. Svi Shapiro, "Radical Movements, Ideology, and the Sociology of Educational Ideas," *Social Praxis* 6 (1979): 193-215, 197-198; W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 145-148, 248.

many blacks also wanted to go to Liberia.¹⁰⁸ In 1879, Adams prepared a petition for Congress asking for, “a Territory to ourselves or an appropriation of money to send us to Liberia.” He reported in 1880 that blacks from Caddo and Bossier parishes wanted to leave the state and others in the area were, “desirous of going to Kansas in order to make money,” and then possibly go on to Liberia.¹⁰⁹ The ever changing destination of southern lower class black separatists supports the idea that settlement locations were of secondary to the amount of independence blacks could enjoy.

The use of social movement theories can help researchers investigate the structure of black territorial separatist movements in the South. The structure of southern black separatist movement participation, ideology, framing, and other characteristics distinguish it from other black separatist movements throughout the country and around the world. Because of repressive conditions in the south, the contribution of black southerners to black separatism has not fully been recognized. Southern black separatists’ usage of methods such as interracial cooperation and information diffusion are unique to their environment. By including the experiences of the southern black lower class in studies of Black Nationalism, researchers have the opportunity to learn from a largely subaltern group and gain greater comparative knowledge of issues facing blacks in slave and post slave societies.

¹⁰⁸ Robert G. Athearn, *In Search of Canaan: Black Migration to Kansas, 1879-1880*. (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978) Kenneth Hamilton, *Black Towns and Profit*, 5-43; Nell Irvin Painter. *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).

¹⁰⁹ “A Great Movement,” *The African Repository* 53 (October 1877): 114; Henry Adams to William Coppinger, New Orleans, Louisiana, 12 July 1880, ACS, LOC.

CONCLUSION

The history of black people in the United States is one of resistance. This resistance has varied widely by context ranging from accommodative strategies to violent uprisings. Territorial separatism is one of the most radical facets of the black protest tradition. The advocacy of separatism by southern blacks is an important indicator of the group's proclivity towards radical thought. While some scholars have placed territorial separatism on the fringes of black protest, this study believes this tendency to be a gross misconception. Separatism enjoyed wide support among southern blacks particularly those from the lower socio-economic classes.

The black lower class in the South was more vulnerable to economic and racial exploitation than other classes of blacks in the North. Their decision to participate in colonization and emigration movements was a rational attempt to improve their condition in a repressive environment. The lack of acceptable avenues for black protest in the South facilitated the widespread support of radical agendas such as separatism among the lower class.

Fundamental to black separatism in the South are the concepts of land and liberty. Ex-slaves and poor free blacks primarily supported separatism in order to achieve these two goals, which represented principles of economic independence and increasing political rights. The unique contribution of lower class black southerners to Black Nationalism offer researchers an alternative view of its development taking place outside of the discourse among the black Northern upper class.

The use of social movement theory, specifically political process, resource mobilization, spatial and grievance theories, to the study of black separatism also offers researchers valuable insights. Before and after emancipation, black southerners navigated political opportunities or

the lack there of, in order to obtain their goals. Working under repressive conditions in the South during both periods, they utilized the resources of white colonization organizations and separatist sympathizers to gain support.

While the grievances of black southerners remained relatively constant throughout the long nineteenth century, centering on increased political and economic rights, blacks could not initiate independent separatist movements until after the Civil War. During slavery white colonizationists determined where black southerners would emigrate as well as when and in what manner. After the War, black collective action for separatism spread locally throughout a region and was not subject to the whims of white owners or the strategies of warring nations. Black southerners practiced greater self-determination and implemented independent movements only during times of exigency when they perceived separatism to be in their best interest.

During the Revolutionary Era black southerners took advantage of wartime conditions to gain freedom and access to land by aligning themselves with competing powers, most notably the British. By allying with the British, black southerners were able to achieve separatist goals, despite being unable to form independent movements. Likewise during the antebellum era, their participation with white colonizationists allowed them to realize goals of increasing economic and political status. During both periods black collective action was limited to participation within white movements.

These early developmental stages of black separatism in the South foreshadowed the movement's zenith, which emerged during the postwar period when blacks could act collectively and autonomously to achieve their goals. They chose separatism only during periods of racial violence and political or economic strain. These disturbances not only affected the daily lives of

black southerners causing many to advocate separatism, but also disheartened many regarding the obtainment of land and liberty in the South.

Although spanning more than a century, the experiences of the black lower classes in the South who participated in movements for territorial separatism are remarkably consistent. Many of these participants were illiterate, so word of mouth and first hand testimony concerning a perspective settlement site remained a critical tool for recruitment throughout movements of the revolutionary, antebellum, and post Civil War eras. Throughout the former periods black southerners generally did not possess publishing houses, own newspapers, or orchestrate other print media through which to establish a discourse. Instead they utilized the institutions and mediums that were controlled by whites such as the *Africa Repository* and the American Colonization Society to achieve their goals.

Familial networks present another pattern of participation in southern separatist movements. Often during the revolutionary and antebellum periods white authorities did not or could not guarantee the participation of all family members willing to potentially emigrate. Faced with such obstacles early black separatists at times were compelled by circumstance to forgo the journey without loved ones, but whenever possible exercised whatever power they possessed to secure the passage of all members of their families who wished to leave the South. In slavery and freedom southern blacks participated in separatism as families. The majority of blacks leaving the South whether through British evacuations, acceptance by the Sierra Leone Company, sponsorship through the American Colonization Society, or through independent means travelled with family members.

One's residence is also a strong indicator of movement participation. Members of the same community emigrated together when possible. During the chaos of the American

Revolution and the War of 1812 groups of runaway slaves from the same plantation or area fled to British lines. During the antebellum era often owners manumitted groups of slaves for the expressed purpose of colonization in Liberia and in doing so to some degree facilitated the transplantation of a cohesive community. Similarly after the Civil War large groups of ex-slaves left the South together, but unlike the previous period, were able to explicitly organize complex and long term movements involving numerous members of their community.

The beginnings of black separatism's organizational development can be found in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, however such resources did not come to fruition until after the Civil War when black separatists had the opportunity to form independent groups to further their cause. One of the key institutions utilized by black separatists both before and after slavery is the black church. Leaders and even pastors who supported separatism used it as a structure through which to voice their support, however they generally did not use providential arguments. Rather black separatists used the church for meetings, to recruit participants, and as an organizing structure.

Some separatist leaders were also ministers. They were traditional leaders in black communities and transferred that role to leadership in separatist movements. Other black leaders gained their authority from charisma or occupational status. Many southern black separatist leaders were neither wealthy nor elite and did not possess the resources to publicize their messages to a wide audience. They worked mostly on the grassroots level to recruit participants, figure the logistics of leaving, talk with the proper authorities and handle other necessary arrangements involved in a separatist movement.

When seeking assistance with or inquiring about emigration and colonization, black separatists framed their reasons for leaving using distinct arguments. The use of specific frames

by blacks began during the Revolutionary Era and developed throughout the nineteenth century. Early separatists espoused frames encompassing altruism through loyalty or evangelism, but after emancipation also expressed arguments implying a sense of fairness in their desire to emigrate.

While separatism implies a strict division between whites and blacks, southern separatism is distinguished by the interracial strategy used by black participants. This strategy is present throughout the movement's development over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the American Revolution and the War of 1812 southern blacks allied themselves with the British to achieve freedom and to become land owners. In the antebellum era the same goals were achieved through cooperation with the ACS and perhaps a progressive owner. Southern blacks relationship with the ACS continued after the Civil War and expanded to include members of the American government such as the freedmen's bureau or government officials. Developing simultaneously with the use of organizational interracial cooperation, some whites personally cooperated with black separatists by working with government authorities on their behalf, providing recommendations of character, or helping clear up matters delaying participation.

In many ways the dearth of images of southern black separatists in Hollywood is mirrored in academia. While in recent years, several notable works have been written on the subject, a need for more research still exists. More in depth analysis is needed on the state level. More work can also be collected on movements to the Caribbean or the emergence of all black towns in the South. The contributions of southern blacks to other forms of separatism in areas such as education, economics, and religion also are in need of further investigation.

The southern black contribution to separatism and radical black protest offer insights into the agency of everyday working individuals. Their militancy is articulated by their action. Tens

of thousands left the South and even more were willing to go. While the public discourse on such issues largely neglected the southern black lower class, their opinions can be found by examining the few writings they left behind through correspondence with others and by their actions. Although their voices were at times repressed, they remained present and their stories of resistance enrich the black protest tradition.

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